



National Pg 3 China to improve sanitation services



National Pg 4 Ministries directed to conduct online meets



National Pg 5 Operator opens modern office in Dodoma



IGA: PM allays fears, insists govt is vigilant

By Getrude Mbago, Dodoma

THE public should not be divided by differing views on the Intergovernmental Agreement (IGA) entered between Tanzania and the Emirate of Dubai as the government is vigilant on the country's vital trade facilitation assets.

Prime Minister Kassim Majaliwa made this observation in his address to adjourn the budget session of the National Assembly yesterday, summing up the government's view on contentions relating to the IGA, approved by the legislature after the budget.

It lays the framework for the development and improving the performance of sea and lake ports, on which he said members of the public need not worry about its implementation as the government was vigilant on the country's resources.

This initiative is not meant to sell the country's harbours, he said when dwelling on the point that the government has heard views of the public and fears expressed from various quarters.

"Since the agreement was approved, there has been various opinions from parliamentarians, scholars and citizens on some aspects of the agreement including port concession, local content and



The initiative will also produce new jobs as it sets robust measures to operational areas in the port

employment," he said, pointing at other areas as the country's security and expected benefits to the agreement.

He urged the public to guard against intentional divisions in expressing views on the agreement, appealing against views that have the potential to split the country on political, ethnic and religious lines.

"The government is careful on this matter and that's why Tanzanians are asked to approach the issue with sober minds and uphold peace and harmony," he emphasised.

MPs and all patriotic Tanzanians need to provide the necessary support for implementing the agreement, regardless of varied opinions on the port agreement as the government has a clear vision of delivering positive results to the country, the premier insisted.

The agreement seeks to decongest the Dar es Salaam port and improve its efficiency thus rescuing the country from losing out on revenues tied to current inefficiency at the port, he argued.

The credibility of DP World as a multinational logistics company based in Dubai is irrefutable, credited with handling 190 ports in 68 countries around the world, he reminded the House.

The agreement has in focus a raft of issues, ranging from control of port operations,

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CAG's Reports: MPs for mandatory compliance

By Getrude Mbago, Dodoma

A SECTION of legislators have pushed for improvement of laws, regulations and procedures to hold accountable public institutions and leaders failing to address issues raised by the Controller and Auditor General (CAG).

Naghenjwa Kaboyoka, (Special Seats, Opposition), the Public Accounts Committee (PAC) chairperson, proposed that the National Assembly demand legal improvements to make sure leaders and institutions failing to implement parliamentary resolutions on CAG reports are held accountable.

In their reports, the PAC, the Local Authority Accounts Committee (LAAC) and the Public Investments Committee (PIC) listed 1,104 recommendations that were issued by the CAG in previous years that are yet to be observed by central government agencies.

Nine recommendations haven't been implemented by other public institutions, the committees noted in presenting reports on the state of implementation of resolutions reached by the House late last year on the CAG annual report for the 2020/2021 financial year.

Only three resolutions were fully implemented, a fifth of the total, while nearly two thirds were in various stages of implementation, the committee noted.

Permanent secretaries, regional



It is only seven months since the House issued the resolutions for the government to implement...

and district administrative secretaries and other responsible officials are not executing their duties properly in failing to keep records required for submission, she stated.

The committee believes that it is high time the National Assembly improves the relevant provisions to make reckless public servants accountable for failing in their supervision roles, she specified.

LAAC chairperson Halima Mdee (Special Seats-Opposition) said that there was a huge challenge in implementing recommendations in CAG reports.

Areas that should be worked upon include the loss of public funds and challenges in electronic revenue collection systems, she said, also citing poor management of medicines and medical tools supplied in various hospitals, health centres and dispensaries.

Other problem areas include the 10 percent council fund loans to special groups and gaps in execution of various development projects, she stated.

Speaker Dr Tulia Ackson struck a different note in affirming that the government is doing well in implementing resolutions reached by the legislature.

In the past seven months, the government has addressed 48 percent of the recommendations and resolutions issued by the National Assembly regarding the CAG report for the year 2020/21, she stated.

She pointed out that the LAAC report shows that 42 resolutions are being

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Tanga Regional Traffic Police Commander Willy Mwamasika (C, gesturing) conducts an impromptu road safety education session to motorbike taxi riders in Muheza town yesterday. He thereafter ordered his assistants to keep running similar "classes" on a sustainable basis. Photo: Correspondent Steve William

AfDB indicates interest for SGR, TADB lending

By Guardian Correspondent, Dodoma

THE African Development Bank (AfDB) has among other issues, shown interest to lend for implementation of the Standard Gauge Railway (SGR) project.

A Treasury statement said yesterday that the minister, Dr Mwigulu Nchemba said that this inclination was expressed in discussions with Beth Dunford, the AfDB vice president for agriculture and human development.

Apart from the huge strategic SGR project where AfDB can finance some sections yet to receive loan facilitation, the minister said the continental lender was interested to assist the government to increase the capital of the Tanzania Agricultural Development Bank (TADB).

The reason is that it is a driving force



Agro-sector allocations moved from 294bn/- in fiscal 2021/22 to the recently approved 970.8bn/- for the coming financial year

for the implementation of farming projects in the irrigation sector, he said, noting that other areas raised at the meeting include agriculture projects, including youth involvement in modern farming and livestock rearing.

He said the proposal by President Samia Suluhu Hassan to establish a youth focused bank was raised, and accord reached to form a team of experts to look into mechanisms of setting up such a facility.

He expressed gratitude for the bank's assistance in sectors like infrastructure, energy, agriculture, water and education, noting that upwards of \$2.6bn was lent and partially granted for implementing 24 projects.

Farming sector has four per cent of the total funds it has provided to the country,

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KIA: Govt readying bill for shift to TAA

By Guardian Reporter

THE government expects to present a bill in the National Assembly in September to place all operations in airports under the Tanzania Airports Authority (TAA).

Atupele Mwakibete (pictured), the Works and Transport deputy minister, made this announcement in the legislature yesterday, responding to Mwanaisha



Ulega (Special Seats), demanding government plans to place the Kilimanjaro Airport Development Authority (KADCO) under TAA.

She wondered then the process to place KADCO under TAA will be finalised "so that the aim of developing airports is achieved," to which the deputy minister said this would follow approval by the National

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CAG's Reports: MPs for mandatory compliance

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implemented, nine are yet to be implemented and three resolutions are outdated.

"It is only seven months since the House issued the resolutions for the government to implement, but it has implemented upwards of 20 to 40 percent, which shows that the government will complete the work in several months," she asserted.

Legislative follow-up recommendations are intended to ensure that such issues are

addressed and people obtain the appropriate feedback on value-for-money of various programmes and activities by ministerial departments and agencies.

Back in November, the House adopted 38 resolutions requiring the government to work on implementing recommendations made in the 2020/21 CAG report.

The resolutions are meant to address loss of public funds, enhance revenue collection and efficiency in government institutions, she added.

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contract tenure and local content, to the security of the host country, he further noted.

"Throughout the implementation of the envisioned project, Tanzania Ports Authority (TPA) will be responsible for the management of all ports in the country as stipulated in the Ports Act number 17 of 2004," he affirmed.

The Ministry of Works and Transport needs to focus on sensitizing the public on the prospects of the deal, he said, referring to legislators and citizens advising the government to be careful when signing implementation contracts for operation of the port.

"Let me assure all of them that the government is well prepared on this and it will ensure that the agreements to be signed engender productivity in all aspects of port operations," he stated.

Implementation of the agreement will assure port workers of their job security by training to build their capacity. The initiative will also produce new jobs as it sets robust measures to operational areas in the port, he said.

Defence and security at the port will still be supervised by the security organs in accordance with applicable laws and international agreements, in like manner as with the Tanzania International Container Terminal Services (TICTS), he added.

KIA: Govt readying bill for shift to TAA

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Assembly of a legal edict for the measure.

The matter will be taken to the cabinet next month to make it a policy that all airports operate under the TAA, he stated, noting that some airports are presently operating under the Tanzania National Parks Authority (TANAPA).

Others operate under TAA and some other institutions, to which the MP further demanded when TAA will be allowed to collect levies to develop airports around the country.

TAA has installed windows to collect levies in flight landing sites, security checks, booking offices and other services in aviation activity, he said, noting that the Air Transport Services Act section 365 tasks the Tanzania Revenue Authority

(TRA) with collecting revenue and depositing the funds in Treasury accounts.

The revenue is used to pay salaries and building infrastructure, plus other expenses in TAA operations, he suggested, elaborating that the government issues funds for construction of facilities and KADCO is mandated with operations.

It is a company mandated to manage the Kilimanjaro International Airport (KIA), develop modern infrastructure and facilities, along with delivering quality airport services to aviation stakeholders, he explained.

KIA is known as the gateway to Africa's wildlife, serving as a strategic airport enabling tourists, wildlife enthusiasts and other visitors to land within the northern tourism circuit, he added.

Leaders to convene in Johannesburg for Africa health business symposium 2023

JOHANNESBURG

KEY stakeholders in health and business will meet tomorrow in Sandton, Johannesburg for the 8th edition of the Africa Health Business Symposium (AHBS VIII) to discuss the vital role of the private sector in bolstering health systems across the continent.

The symposium will bring together policymakers, government representatives, development partners and business leaders under the theme—"The Role of the Private Sector in Africa's New Public Health Order".

It is meant to provide a platform for comprehensive deliberations on Africa CDC's New Public Health Order, a bold and ambitious framework that urges greater investment in Africa's health institutions, health workforce, and medical manufacturing capacity, while calling for respectful, action-oriented partnerships across the continent.

equipped, and motivated health workers, to creating markets for diagnostics, vaccines and medicines produced on the continent."

He added: "Creating stronger linkages between the private and public sectors, development partners, academic institutions and community-based organisations can unlock the vast resources that Africa needs to prevent and prepare for the next pandemic and achieve health for all."

Dr Nicaise Ndembu, Editor-in-Chief of the Journal of Public Health in Africa at Africa CDC said: "Addressing Africa's health crisis demands a departure from conventional approaches and a shift to innovative, people-centred solutions that address the funding, governance, accountability, and workforce gaps that have plagued our health systems for decades. These gaps have resulted in us shouldering 26 percent of the global disease burden despite accounting for just 16 percent of the world's population. This symposium therefore will seek to rally stakeholders across sectors to implement the lessons learned from the COVID-19 pandemic and collectively chart a path towards resilient and self-sufficient health systems for Africa."



Ummy Nderiananga (R), Deputy Minister of State in the Prime Minister's Office (Policy, Parliament and Coordination), presents a souvenir to CBM (Christian Blind Mission) Country director Dominique Schlupkothen in Dodoma city yesterday. The agency is an international Christian development organisation committed to improving the quality of life of persons with disabilities in the poorest communities of the world. Photo: PMO

AfDB indicates interest for SGR, TADB lending

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he stated, underlining that African countries had agreed to increase investments in irrigation farming, crop value addition and storage

after harvest. The government is implementing this accord by increasing budgetary provisions thereof, he stated.

Agro-sector allocations moved from 294bn/- in fiscal 2021/22 to

the recently approved 970.8bn/- for the coming financial year, he said, while the AfDB top executive praised the government for its development efforts.

She pledged that AfDB

collaboration with the government was focused on finalizing ongoing development projects in agriculture, livestock and fishing in particular, the statement added.



President Samia Suluhu Hassan bids farewell to Dr Beth Dunford, the African Development Bank's Vice President for Agriculture and Human and Social Development, after talks at Chamwino State House in Dodoma Region on Tuesday. Photo: State House

Government receives seven vehicles from UNFPA to support reproductive health

By Correspondent James Kandoya

THE government has received seven vehicles worth 570 m/- from the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) to support reproductive health coordination, field monitoring and capacity development.

Speaking yesterday in Dar es Salaam at a function to handover the vehicles, UNFPA Country Representative, Mark Schreiner said that the support aims at ensuring availability of quality reproductive health services.

He said the purpose of vehicles, requested by implementing partners and procured by UNFPA, is to support reproductive health coordination, field monitoring and

capacity development. Schreiner said that the vehicles will accelerate efforts to provide quality reproductive health services for all, and rev up the shared engine capacity, driving forward toward their goal: zero preventable maternal death.

Over the past year, UNFPA country office and partners, led by the Government have: trained hundreds of health care workers in sexual and reproductive health, and expanded reproductive health and family planning programming, thereby preventing hundreds of maternal and child deaths.

"We are keeping our eyes on the road ahead, with the Government of Tanzania at the wheel, to achieve

the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Our partnerships with the Government of Tanzania, development agencies and NGOs are a driving force".

According to the Tanzania Demographic Health Survey, five years ago, the number of women who died in childbirth was more than one in 200 (TDHS 2015/16). More recently, maternal deaths are reported to be one out of 400 (TDHS 2020/21).

In the year 2020 a total of 5,400 maternal deaths were recorded in Tanzania. The goal is zero preventable maternal deaths, and to leave no one behind.

Dar es Salaam Regional Administrative Secretary, Rehema

Madenge said that the two regions Dar es Salaam and Dodoma are the major beneficiaries of the five years programme.

She said the three vehicles were distributed to three ministries namely, President's Office, Regional Administration and Local Government Tanzania (PO-RALG) and one vehicle was given to Zanzibar Revolutionary government Ministry of health, and Prime Minister's Office - Labour, Youth, Employment and Persons with Disabilities, while the rest three were distributed to Dar es Salaam, Dodoma region and Tanzania Training Centre for International Health, Ifakara.

Dr Rashid Mfaume, the Dar es Salaam Regional Medical Officer said the government and UNFPA are implementing a five years (2022-2027) Urban Reproductive Health Programme.



Goats are skinned and generally prepared for sale at a special corner at Dar es Salaam's Kisutu mixed-goods market yesterday. It was all in readiness for today's celebration of Eid al-Adha - the Feast of Sacrifice that is known as the second and largest of the two main holidays celebrated in Islam. Photo: Correspondent Miraji Msala

PM to councils: Pay compensation for all land taken over from owners

By Guardian Reporter, Dodoma

PRIME Minister Kassim Majaliwa has instructed all local councils in the country to make sure that all areas land away from the people are compensated in time in order to avoid conflicts that can arise in future.

Majaliwa said there have been complaints from some people in various areas including the City of Dodoma not being compensated after their land was taken away by

Dodoma city Council. The Prime Minister made the remarks here yesterday in Parliament during his speech for the adjournment of the 12th Parliament until August 29 this year.

He said the need for implementing of economic and social development including establishing new settlements has increased, adding "the it is essential for the increase to adhere to our country's urban planning."

Majaliwa also directed all local councils to survey land areas for economic and social activities including land plots for human settlements instead of leaving people to establish unplanned squatters.

In the meantime, Prime Minister Majaliwa instructed accounting officers to boost the supervision public financial expenditure and fully implement the FY 2023/24 budget plan.

He also called on ministries

and government institutions to make conduct online meetings in order to reduce huge financial expenditure and other unnecessary spending.

"Government officials should boost revenue collection and spend the money while abiding to priority areas for FY 2023/24 as well as inventing new revenue sources," he said.

He also used the occasion to call upon government officials to adhere to laid down regulations, laws and procedures in procurement of goods and services and public financial expenditure in order to attain the set economic development goals.

China commits to continue working with government on strategies to improve water, sanitation services

By Correspondent Joseph Mwendapole

CHINA'S Ambassador to Tanzania, Chen Mingjian, has expressed commitment to continue working with the government on strategies to improve water and sanitation services.

She made the promise yesterday after visiting and inspecting the Wami water plant located in Chalinze, Coastal Region that is managed by the Dar es Salaam Water and Sanitation Authority (DAWASA).

She said she was happy to see the great work done to increase water production from the water plant which was built in cooperation between Tanzania and China.

She said the Chinese government is ready to continue cooperating with the Tanzanian government to improve the infrastructure of Wami plant so that it can provide better services to the people it serves.

"We congratulate DAWASA for the steps it took to maintain and improve the infrastructure as well as expand the plant, these are great efforts to be commended, as they aim to provide services to many people," said Ambassador Chen.

Briefing the ambassador about the source of water, Acting Chief Executive Officer of DAWASA, Kiula Kingu said the Chinese ambassador's visit was aimed at monitoring the progress of the plant which was officially launched in 2001.

He said the purpose of the short visit was to visit the systems that was built many years ago and later discuss the important areas of cooperation with the aim of

promoting relations between these two friendly nations.

The government in collaboration with Exim Bank India, has made improvements to expand the production of Wami water plant from producing 7.2 million liters to 21 million liters at present and be able to serve 197,000 people and 47 villages.

He said that until now the implementation of the Chalinze project, the third phase, has reached 95 percent and the remaining work is to set up Information and Communication Technology (ICT) systems to be able to manage the infrastructure of the project which serves the Regions of Coastal, Morogoro and Tanga.

"These ICT systems will enable DAWASA to monitor the trend of water filling in tanks and water supply and the aim of these improvements is to ensure that we increase the availability of water in the urban and rural areas served by this project by 95 percent in urban areas and 85 percent in rural areas," he added.

Mwajuma Saidi, who is a resident of Msata, hailed the government through DAWASA for water availability as they were forced to use much time to find water.

"Water problem was big in this area, we were following salty water in the valley which was not safe for health, now we are thankful that the problem is over," he said.

The third phase of the Chalinze water project has been implemented by DAWASA with the aim of providing water to 274,603 people of Chalinze, Morogoro, Pwani, Ngerengere and some villages in Handeni District, Tanga region.



Dr Mahesh Swaminathan (C), the US Centres for Disease Control and Prevention Country Director in Tanzania, and Joe Vazquez (2nd-R) from US Drug Enforcement Authority pictured earlier this week in Arusha city together with officials from the US Embassy in Tanzania at an International Day Against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking (June 26). Photo: Guardian Correspondent

Health centres urged to submit their drugs requisitions in time

By Guardian Reporter

HEALTH service providers have been urged to make sure they submit requisitions for drugs and medical devices as early as possible to the Medical Stores Department (MSD) so as to have them in time.

Rehema Madenge, Dar es Salaam Regional Administrative Secretary issued the appeal in Dar es Salaam on Monday when addressing health services stakeholders in

the Region at a meeting aimed to discuss ways to make sure drugs and medical devices are received at health centres in time.

The meeting was organised by MSD Dar es Salaam Zone that incorporates Coast and Morogoro regions as well as Zanzibar.

She said she had made the visit and discovered the MSD was full of drugs and medical devices needs to reach those in need in time but the main snag is the delay in

the applications regarding fast response to the requisitions.

"I stress that in this issue, both health services providers should make sure they submit their requisitions in time in order to get the drugs as quickly as possible," she said.

She added that this way will help in increasing the money value and the availability of uninterrupted health services.

Earlier, Rashid Mfaume, Dar

es Salaam Regional Medical Officer urges for involvement of health service providers by MSD on how they can remove obstacles regarding health services provision.

For his part, MSD Director General, Leopold Shayo pledged to continue providing exemplary service, as well as improving its services by holding regular meeting with stakeholders to iron out deficiencies that arise.

Earlier, Dar es Salaam Zone MSD Manager, Bettie Kaema said they have held discussions with the Region's drugs experts and pharmacists during which they exchanged experiences and strategies.

CDC hails government's move to implement MAT programme

By Correspondent Mary Kadoke

THE Centre for Diseases Control and Prevention (CDC) has commended government's move to implement the Medication Assisted Treatment (MAT) programme which has offered a learning window for other countries.

CDC Tanzania Country Director, Dr. Mahesh Swaminathan, gave the remarks over the weekend in Arusha during the country's commemoration of the International Day against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking 2023.

"As we commemorate the International Day Against Drug Abuse, it is worth recognizing that MAT clinics in Tanzania have scientifically proven to reduce opioid dependence, highly cost-beneficial and are the most effective treatment for keeping users in recovery. The beneficiaries' present today can testify to the benefits," he said.

He added: "The clinics are an innovative and important strategy to reduce opioid use disorders, prevent other infectious diseases, avert the HIV epidemic, and end HIV by 2030.

He said the clinics have provided a unique opportunity for the United States of America and other sub-Saharan Africa countries to learn and incorporate the best practices used here in Tanzania.

He further hailed the DCEA Regional and Council Health Management Teams, and the Pangea Global AIDS Foundation for collaborating with President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR) for pioneering the first-ever MAT clinic in sub-Saharan Africa.

According to official data, in 2014 there were over 30,000 people who inject drugs in the country, 36-percent of whom are HIV-positive, where as to address that, PEPFAR, through CDC, in 2011 launched the first MAT clinic to reduce HIV transmission in sub-Saharan Africa at Muhimbili National Hospital (MNH) in Dar es Salaam.

DCEA Commissioner General, Aretas Lyimo said the authority's responsibility on reducing supply, demand harm and strengthening regional and international cooperation from March 25 to June 19 this year, 109 suspects, including three foreigners, were arrested for drugs trafficking.

"We managed to seize various types of illicit drugs, including 200.5 kilograms of heroin and 978 bags of dried cannabis which were ready for transportation," he said.

In collaboration with the International Narcotic Control Board (INCB), the DCEA also managed to block 1,505.46 kilogrammes

of chemicals from entering the country thus.

Commissioner Lyimo noting that the 109 people arrested have identified the existence of influential foreigners with legal permits who operate behind the scenes and may not be directly involved in drug trafficking.

Most of them, he said, have been in close relationships with businesswomen and women who are not working so that it could be easy for them to send someone at any time to go and get illicit drugs.

The CDC provides technical collaborations and support to the Government of Tanzania's efforts to strengthen public health in Tanzania including malaria, tuberculosis and HIV and other communicable diseases such as covid 19 and the recent one Marburg Virus Disease.

MAT clinics provide vital health services, including managing and preventing drug overdose, HIV testing, counseling and linkage to care, screening for tuberculosis and hepatitis, providing condoms, mental health counseling, and other community referrals.

Dr. Mahesh Swaminathan received an award recognizing CDC effort in fighting against drug use disorders from President Samia Suluhu Hassan.

IN THE HIGH COURT OF TANZANIA
DAR ES SALAAM DISTRICT REGISTRY
AT DAR ES SALAAM CIVIL CASE NO. 235 2022
TATA AFRICA HOLDING (T) LIMITED, PLAINTIFF
VERSUS
1. MOHAMED SAID MOHAMED, 1ST DEFENDANT
& SAID MOHAMED ZAD, 2ND DEFENDANT

TO:
1. Mohamed Said Mohamed,
P.O. Box 1005
Forest Hqya
Jumba Mtoho St
Morogoro
2. Said Mohamed Zad
P.O. Box 1005
Forest Hqya
Jumba Mtoho St
Morogoro

SUMMONS FOR PUBLICATION
Where the Plaintiff has instituted a Civil Case against you, you are hereby summoned to appear in this court in person or by a pleader duly instructed and able to answer all material questions relating to the appeal or who shall be accompanied by some person able to answer all such questions on the 08th day of July, 2023 at 9:00 am. O'clock before Hon. J.J.P. MUSA, J.J. to answer the suit, you must be prepared to produce on that day all the documents upon which you intend to rely in support of your defence.

Take notice that, in default of your appearance on the day before mentioned, the Civil Case will be heard and determined in your absence given under my hand and seal this 29th day of June 2023.

China to enhance cooperation with EAC in capacity building and trade

By Guardian Reporter

CHINA has pledged to strengthen cooperation with the East African Community (EAC) in capacity building, trade, infrastructure development and other fields.

Chinese Ambassador to Tanzania and the EAC, Chen Mingjian said that China as the world's largest developing country was highly optimistic about promoting economic growth not just in the EAC but on the entire African continent.

Amb Mingjian said that China would remain a staunch and strong supporter of EAC on development matters, and reaffirmed her country's desire to strengthen collaboration and solidarity with the Community for the mutual benefit of both parties.

The Chinese envoy described the EAC as the sub-regional organisation with the highest degree of integration in Africa, adding that the Community was peace and security among other noble initiatives.

"China highly appreciates the significant contribution made by EAC in maintaining regional peace and stability, improving regional infrastructure, jointly fighting against the COVID-19, promoting regional economic integration and economic recovery of countries in the region," said Amb Mingjian.

Amb Mingjian was speaking at the EAC Headquarters in Arusha, Tanzania where she officially handed over eight vehicles - three (3) buses and five (5) double cabin pick-ups - to the EAC.

The envoy said the \$400,000 donation of vehicles from the Chinese government would assist the EAC by improving its capacity in organising and coordinating meetings and events across the region.

She disclosed that China had also dispatched technicians and assorted motor vehicle spare parts to aid in the maintenance and

operations of the vehicles, adding that the vehicles are from the most well-known Chinese automobile manufacturers including Zhongtong and JMC.

"The eight vehicles I am going to hand over to the EAC Secretariat today are all aided by the Chinese government, including 2 medium buses, 1 large bus and 5 pick-up trucks. These vehicles are all from the most well-known automobile brands in China, like Zhongtong Bus, Jiangling Motors, with reliable quality and strong practicability," she said.

"From March 14th to 17th this year, the project implementation company dispatched 4 technicians to Arusha to provide technical services such as inspection and maintenance for the vehicles, and to provide guidance and training for drivers and technicians of the EAC," added the envoy.

Receiving the buses the Director of Social Sectors at the EAC Secretariat, Dr Irene Isaka, thanked the government of China for the generous donation noting that the handover was a demonstration of the excellent relations existing between China and the EAC.

"The friendly relations between China and EAC have continued to develop in depth, and pragmatic cooperation in various fields has achieved remarkable results. On an annual basis, the peoples of China have been supporting EAC capacity building programmes," said Dr Isaka.

"Last year, China donated funds to EAC to support EAC's development projects and the 4th EAC Youth Leadership Summit. China has also continued to make substantial contributions in the region especially in the areas of infrastructure development projects geared towards promotion of intra-EAC trade," said D. Isaka.

She commended China for reaffirming her commitment to support peace building and good governance initiatives in the region.

African leaders meet in Angola to discuss tensions in East DRC

LUANDA

THE President of the African Union has said the deterioration of the situation in the east of the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) 'destabilizes the country' and hinders efforts to make the country 'a source of happiness and not of conflict'.

Azali Assoumani, who was speaking at the opening of the Quadripartite Summit of Heads of State and Government on the pacification of eastern DRC, taking place in Luanda, said the prevailing situation 'is a concern of the region, the continent and the rest of the world'.

"The deterioration of the humanitarian and security situation in the territory of the DRC is destabilizing this country", said Assoumani, stressing that the crisis is particularly worrying as it occurs in a territory with many undeniable economic and human riches.

For the acting president of the African Union (AU), the destabilization in eastern DRC "could lead all of Africa on the same path", thus defending the "intensification of joint and active actions to reach solutions in favor of a peaceful and prosperous Congo".

"And for that we need to have political, diplomatic and security solutions that are adapted, effective, innovative so that we can reinforce them in order to avoid duplication of efforts and also competition between regional mechanisms", he stressed.

The need for pacification in eastern DR Congo, where military tension persists and this country opposes Rwanda, is the focus of this summit of heads of state and government of the four African regional blocs.

High-level representatives of the Southern African Development Community (SADC), the East African Community (EAC), the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region (ICGL) and the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS) participate

in this summit in Luanda.

"The strategic objectives of this summit are to agree on adapting a joint framework and modality for the implementation and monitoring of these initiatives for peace in eastern DR Congo", said Azali Assoumani, also head of state of Comoros.

The African leader recalled that the DR Congo is a country rich in diverse resources, but that the local populations live in extreme poverty, mainly because of the conflict, considering that the regional blocs must be actors of peace and stability.

"That's why we must put everything in motion to reverse this tendency to make the DR Congo a source of happiness and not a source of conflict and that is why we have to play as actors of peace, stability and development", he stressed.

Azali Assoumani also saluted the Angolan President, João Lourenço, and the Angolan diplomacy for their "efforts, engagement and permanent availability at the service of harmony and robust coordination of the security crisis" in eastern DR Congo.

For his part, the president of the AU Commission, Moussa Faki Mahamat, said that the meeting, under the aegis of the body he represents, "is a new testimony" of his "unfailing commitment to" finding "African solutions to African problems". "As I always say, the great African lakes constitute the heart that beats in the heart of the continent", he pointed out, referring that the AU is committed to contributing to the restoration of peace and security in the region.

"And that for us is imperative to respect our principles, to be faithful to our project to silence the guns", he pointed out.

Moussa Faki Mahamat also considered, in his speech, that the need to coordinate efforts at the level of regional organizations "is imposed with much more urgency" in order to have "much more efficiency and a very parsimonious management of resources".



Prime Minister Kassim Majaliwa delivers address in the National Assembly in Dodoma city yesterday, signalling the end of the Union legislative body's marathon Budget meeting for the year. Photo: Correspondent Ibrahim Joseph

Majaliwa instructs ministries, public institutions to conduct online meets

By Getrude Mbago, Dodoma

AS the implementation of the new financial year budget plan set to kick off on July 1, Prime Minister Kassim Majaliwa has instructed permanent secretaries, ministry, regional and district leaders to effectively supervise proper spending of public funds, cut expenditure so as to achieve intended goals.

He wanted ministries and public institutions to prioritise conducting most of their meetings online so as to prevent spending of the funds that will incur unnecessary expenses.

Adjourning the parliamentary budget session yesterday here, Prime Minister Kassim Majaliwa wanted leaders to all the time stick to code of conduct and be careful when conducting various public procurements for the government to achieve its intended goals in

economy and development.

"Government officials should also strengthen collection of revenues and adhere to areas of priority in the implementation of the 2023/24 budget plan while also coming up with new sources of income," Majaliwa emphasized.

The Prime Minister directed all district councils to ensure that they pay on time all people who are eligible to be compensated after they were evacuated from their land plots.

"There are a series of complaints from some citizens in Dodoma city that their plots were taken by the city council but are yet to be compensated, so I want these people to be paid and this should be applied in all districts to ensure that they compensate people on time," he said.

He wanted the Ministry for Livestock and Fisheries to put

much emphasis in transforming the livestock sector by investing in programmes to educate pastoralists on modern livestock keeping which embraces having a small number of animals for more benefits.

"Many livestock keepers in the country still have low knowledge on the importance of smart keeping; they only think that having large groups of animals is payable which is not true, having just few animals at home who receive good care is very profitable," he said.

He further directed the ministry of livestock and fisheries to invest in research which will help bring answers to the challenges facing the lucrative sector.

"It is high time now for Tanzania to shun away from traditional livestock keeping and adopt smart practices so as to achieve development goals. The Ministry and other authorities sit down

with herders and educate them on the importance of adopting new ways of animal keeping to increase productivity," he added.

The Premier further wanted the Ministry of Lands, Housing and Human Settlement Development to work closely with the Ministry of Livestock and Fisheries and the President's Office, Regional Administration and Local Government Authorities to identify and allocate special grazing areas so as to curb unnecessary land conflicts.

On Water, the Premier wanted the ministry to be innovative and strengthen efforts to implement water projects as well as reviving water wells that have plenty of water but are not used.

The National Environment Management Council (NEMC) should conduct a special environmental destruction assessment in the country and put robust strategies that will stimulate agriculture, irrigation farming and grazing without affecting water sources and protected areas.



Information, Communications and Information Technology minister Nape Nnauye (2nd-R) has a word in Dodoma city on Tuesday with members of the Vodacom Tanzania management team at the inauguration of the firm's state-of-the-art offices that are complete with, among other facilities, special equipment for use by customers with visual and hearing impairment. The others include Parliamentary Infrastructure Committee chairman Selemani Kakoso (R), Vodacom Tanzania Consumer Business Unit director Linda Riwa (2nd-L), and the firm's managing director, Philip Besimire (4th-L). Photo: Guardian Correspondent

'Z'bar statistics development strategy will boost data use'

By Guardian Reporter, Zanzibar

ZANZIBAR Deputy minister for Finance and Planning, Ali Suleiman Ameir says the existence of the strategy to develop statistics in Zanzibar will help in the increase and use of statistics when making the country's development plans.

Speaking here this week at the launching of Zanzibar Statistics Development Strategy, Ameir said the development of the Isles needs correct statistics and the preparation of the strategy will help in great use of statistics for the evaluation and follow up development plans.

He explained that needs for statistics keeps on increasing,

hence their availability to a large extent depends on the ability of the institutions in their production.

He added that huge human and financial resources are invested in the collection of reports for statistics, but, he said, there is still a challenge in satisfying the needs according to the capability of the institution in collecting, analysing and publish statistics in accordance to the needs.

He said the Zanzibar Statistics system has shown to have little capability in submitting all statistics required owing to lack of strategies, weakness in institutional make-up and coordination in sourcing statistics from various stakeholders.

He said in order for Zanzibar to have sustainable development, needs for quality statistics at the right time is essential for the follow up of the goal of the 2050 National Development Vision, blue economy policy, Zanzibar development Programme (ZADEP) and other sectoral plans.

The Zanzibar Statistics Development strategy will have the structure to build the statistical ability to make systems that will enhance the production of statistics and their use.

The Zanzibar Government Chief Statistician, Salum Kassim Ali said quality statistics that are obtained in time enable the examination, follow up and good supervision of

results thereof.

For his part, Tanzania's UNFPA Country Representative, Mark Bryan Schreiner said the strategy will guide the efforts in collecting, analysing and publishing of the correct information regarding the statistics.

He said within four years, UNFPA has been collaborating with both the Office of the Chief Government Statistician (OCGS) and the National Bureau of statistics in developing the country's system for statistics and the launch shows the importance in the journey towards to utilise the ability of data and statistics in reaching the correct decisions for boosting sustainable development.

Faith leaders, CSOs appeal for 'tax justice'

By Guardian Correspondent, Arusha

FAITH leaders and Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) have highlighted the importance of having a national tax system that includes 'Tax Justice' to help combat tax evasion and bring equality.

Tax Justice is a system that takes into consideration transparency, accountability, cooperation with other international bodies to achieve equality and social justice through fair taxes on wealthier members of the society and multinational corporations.

The call was made in Arusha yesterday during the capacity building training that aims to equip religious leaders and other CSOs representatives in Tanzania with relevant knowledge, skills and tools related to tax justice and tax justice advocacy.

The two day event was organized by Interfaith Standing Committee on Economic Justice and Integrity of Creation (ISCEJIC) in partnership with Norwegian Church Aid (NCA) Tanzania.

"If the tax system do not consider the issue of tax justice the likelihood of losing revenue is high because some of the people who have that ability to pay tax will not pay" said Norah Kawiche, Assistant Lecturer at St Agustin University (SAUT)

KAWICHE added that with the absence of tax justice, the authority cannot effectively collect tax and also some of the wealthier people will also not pay tax and the poor will take the burden.

Speaking at the event, Francis Kairu, a Policy Officer from Tax Justice Network Africa, said that for the country to achieve tax justice must tax the people equitably, those that earn more should pay more and ensuring that they are reducing the tax burden to ordinary people and companies are paying their fair amount of tax.

The officer explained that some of the companies evade tax and then end up by finding that the ordinary people are paying more to cover the gap because the companies and multinationals are not paying their fair amount of tax.

Kairu asked the government to strengthen the legal system, tax laws and regulations in order to minimize the loophole that is used in avoiding tax.

However, speaking of how the government can finance development issues in the country, he said domestic resources mobilisation is an important tool that can be used to mobilize resources to fund development.

"We only have several options which the government can raise revenue for development finance, the options are debt, Aid, Private Public Partnership (PPP) and the most important is domestic resources mobilization", the expert explained.

He added that the option of debt is not perfect because it is not sustainable in the long run as well as PPP have been exploited by private entities to make profit at the expense of development, therefore the best and sustainable option is domestic resources mobilization.

The officer stated that "to action that there is a need to put taxes in proper use because when people see how positively their tax being used they will be willing to pay more tax voluntarily". Must ensure that the collected tax does not ends into the pocket of few but go-to provides the majority need.

Menonite Church Bishop and the Chairman of ISCEJIC, Bishop Nelson Kisare said Taxes are important for the development of the nation and its people, that's why there is no nation that does not collect taxes, but the biggest challenge is the how the tax is collected and its use.

ISCEJIC is the national interfaith platform that represents major faith communities in Tanzania. The platform is jointly owned by the National Muslim Council of Tanzania (BAKWATA), Tanzania Episcopal Conference (TEC) and the Christian Council of Tanzania (CCT).

"to action that there is a need to put taxes in proper use because when people see how positively their tax being used they will be willing to pay more tax voluntarily"

Employees with disabilities scan constitution for pen trade union

By Correspondent Valentine Oforo, Dodoma

MORE than 200 workers with physical disabilities from public and private entities are convening in Dodoma to review and improve proposed constitution draft for registration of the Tanzania Trade Union of Workers with Disabilities (TATUWOD).

The envisaged trade union focuses on advocating for the statutory rights of the said handicapped Tanzanians, especially at work places.

Hosted by the Ikupa Trust Fund (ITF) with cooperation from the Foundation for Civil Society (FCS) and National Microfinance Bank (NMB), the two -day consultative general meeting has been tailored to provide a key podium for involved members to discuss and develop positive inputs for the improvement of the said proposed constitution draft, and its regulations.

Other key stakeholders behind the timely meeting include Christian Blind Mission (CBM), KCB and CRDB Bank.

Deputy Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Community Development, Gender, Women, and Special Groups, Amon Mpanju challenged members to use the platform to share useful ideas and experiences in order to come out with the best constitution which will help to free them from all changes they're encountering.

"This forum is yours, be free to express your experience and observations to help develop the active constitution and its regulations with an eye to improve your wellbeing at working places," he urged members.

He said the meeting for the establishment of the trade union was in line with the country's set laws towards the employees with disabilities, added that the aspiration was also adhering to international laws.

"I want to assure you that the government will continue to work

and implement a series of strategies meant to see you living good and treated respectful at working places, and within your respective communities," said the Deputy Minister.

NMB Chief Human Resource Officer, Emmanuel Akonaay said the bank feels proud to be part of the move.

"NMB has been and will continue to support the concerted efforts to help the people with disabilities in Tanzania to escape from the all shackles of discriminations at working areas," he said, noting the bank bank has employed a number of workers with disabilities and that it was treating them equally with others.

Special Seat MP, Stella Ikupa appreciated the numerous supports being rolled out by the stakeholders to back up the different initiatives for supporting the disabled communities in the country.

"The Ikupa Trust Fund cannot stand alone to push for the welfare and development of the disabled in the country, this area calls for collective interventions," she said.

Peter Charles, the Technical Director for the people with disabilities told The Guardian that the development was a result of the likeminded meeting held last year, which among others laid a foundation stone for establishment of the vital trade union.

"The general quest is to ensure workers with disabilities are treated equally at their working places, whereby there must be presence of friendly infrastructures to cater for the physical requirements of people with disabilities at working places," he briefed.

He said the government in cooperation with the development partners and stakeholders in the private sector have so far worked to improve policies and livelihoods of the physically handicapped employees, but much must be put in place to erode the remaining setbacks.



Hans Charles (in blue helmet), construction supervisor of Dar es Salaam's Mbagala Zakhem Market, briefs Group Six International Ltd project manager Liu Jianhua (R) yesterday before handing over to Temeke municipality the now-completed 2.4bn/- facility put up under Dar es Salaam Metropolitan Development Project. Photo: Guardian Correspondent

Ministry hails Vodacom Tanzania for opening a modern office in Dodoma

By Guardian Correspondent, Dodoma

MINISTER of Information, Communication and Information Technology, Nape Nnauye has commended Vodacom Tanzania for opening a modern office in Dodoma.

The minister made the statement during inauguration of Vodacom's new office and shop in the capital city.

"Within a short time, our sector has witnessed tremendous success that contributed to our development. Among the achievement include the increase in the number of phone users from 51.3 million registered SIM cards in 2020 to 61.88 by March 2023 whereby 30 per cent of them is from Vodacom's subscribers," he said.

The minister noted that during the same period, the number of internet users increased from 26 million to 33.1 million. Another milestone is on the financial inclusion that has seen a significant increase in the usage of mobile money services across the country and reached 44.4 million among them 36 percent use Vodacom's M-Pesa.

Dodoma is a rapidly growing city, not only as the capital but also as a strategic location for business activities, he said, adding the government's transition to Dodoma has been further cemented by the recent inauguration of the State House.

"We have moved government activities here, and I am pleased to see the private sector follow suit to make the transition smooth," said the Minister.

The new Dodoma office is an extension of Vodacom's main headquarters in Dar es Salaam. It is positioned to provide all services available at the head office, reducing the inconvenience of long-distance travel to Dar es Salaam.

The office also features a refurbished Vodashop equipped to serve customers, including a special inclusive desk for persons with disabilities.

HE applauded Vodacom for the investment, expanding its network services, improving the quality of services, and pioneering innovative digital solutions, such as m-mama which continue to impact Tanzanian lives and contribute to

the growth of the sector.

He said the availability of 5G network services in Dodoma through the 5 erected towers makes Tanzania among the few African countries with the service.

"I am pleased to know that you are moving your key operations here, meaning our products and services will be easily accessible to the growing population in Dodoma and surrounding environs. I urge other companies, not just telecommunications providers but also service and product providers, to establish disability-friendly infrastructure to avoid any inconvenience. It is my hope that modern offices like this one will be prioritized in different parts of the country to promote employment, business, and the use of innovative digital services and products such as m-mama and so on," said Nnauye.

Philip Besiimire, Managing Director of Vodacom Tanzania PLC, expressed his joy in finally opening the new modern office in Dodoma.

Besiimire said the office is designed to serve various local and international customers and visitors who come for personal and

government-related activities. It includes meeting rooms, a dedicated room for nursing mothers, and a 'Quiet Room' for staff to unwind.

"We are committed to moving our services closer to our customers, and it is a delight to launch this modern office and shop that is comparable to our headquarters in Dar es Salaam. This spacious and excellent office space takes into consideration the issue of equality and inclusivity for all our customers and staff," he said.

Besiimire added: "Our main goal is to care for our customers and staff by providing them with the opportunity to enjoy communication and digital connectivity. This aligns with our commitment to being innovative in providing solutions for communication and accessing our services."

Rtd Judge Thomas Mihayo, the Chairman of Vodacom Tanzania's Board said: "Vodacom's purpose has always been to connect Tanzanians with reliable and quality communication and technology services, emphasizing digital innovation. I urge the residents of Dodoma and its nearby areas to make good use of this office starting today, as it will efficiently provide the different services and products that we offer nationwide."



Dar es Salaam administrative secretary Rehema Madenge (2nd-L) cuts the ribbon yesterday when presenting six motor vehicles worth 570m/- UNFPA-Tanzania has extended in support to Mother and Child Care projects in Dar es Salaam and Dodoma regions. Left is UNFPA country representative Mark Bryan Schreiner. Photo: Correspondent Sabato Kasika

IITA and partners announce new wilt resistant cooking bananas in Tanzania

By Guardian Reporter and Agencies

TO address the threat of Fusarium Wilt (FW) to banana production in Tanzania, IITA-CGIAR in collaboration with Nelson Mandela African Institution of Science and Technology (NM-AIST) and Tanzania Agricultural Research Institute (TARI), have announced four FW-resistant 'Mchare' cooking bananas for multi-site evaluation by TARI and the Tanzania Official Seed Certification Institute (TOSCI).

For eight years, the IITA breeding and internal pathology department collaborated with partners from Wageningen and Stellenbosch Universities to generate Mchare hybrids resistant to various races of

the Fusarium wilt fungus.

The FW (known locally as Panama disease) Race 1 has become a nightmare to Tanzanian farmers as the fungus can exist in the soil for about 20 years. Another strain, the Tropical Race 4 (TR4), is present in neighbouring Mozambique.

Allan Brown, the banana breeder from IITA said "The resistant Mchare hybrids will ensure that Tanzanian farmers will be able to deal with the FW strains present in Tanzania today and those they are likely to encounter in the future."

In addition to being resistant to FW, Brown also noted that the texture, colour, aroma, and flavour of the new hybrids suggest that they are not significantly different from

conventional Mchare landraces, according to consumer preference scores. However, their yields have increased up to 65 per cent.

Mchare bananas are a cooking banana favoured in Tanzania—the global center of Mchare bananas—and in segments of Kenya and other East African countries. According to Government officials, the Kilimanjaro region of Tanzania produces an average of 700,000 to one million tons of bananas annually, with a single bunch of Mchare bringing up to \$20 in the local markets.

"The development of new banana hybrids can take up to two decades or more, so the development of these promising hybrids that meet

and exceed our product profile in just over seven years is a truly remarkable achievement and a testament to the hard work of the team in Tanzania and the great relationship between IITA and the national programs and international partners," expressed Rony Swennen, the lead banana breeder from IITA.

The efforts undertaken by the IITA team in collaboration with its partners will enhance the significance of bananas not only as a vital food and cash crop but also as a catalyst for bolstering the economy of smallholder farmers.

TARI and TOSCI have already released four matooke hybrids developed by NARO (National Agricultural Research Organisation, Uganda) and IITA, called NARITA, in 2021 in Tanzania. These matooke hybrids, locally named TARIBAN, are currently multiplied on a large scale by two TARI and two private tissue culture labs.

Water projects sustainability facing a challenge - minister

By Guardian Correspondent, Dodoma

WATER minister Jumaa Aweso has said apart from the government spending a lot of money towards water projects in many areas of the country, there is still a challenge regarding the projects failing to be sustainable.

Aweso made the remarks here on Tuesday at the event that unveiled the board of directors of the National Fund for Rural Water and Sanitation Agency (RUWASA).

He said the construction of water projects at the moment is not a problem as the government has been dishing out a lot of funds, but the problem is their failure to become resilient.

He also urged the RUWASA Fund Board to look into how water projects can be self-operating in rural areas.

"Project funds should not be entrusted to water consumers' communities, there must be supervision and should make some assessment whether to continue with the practice or not.

"Some time ago I went to Lupeta Village in Mpwapwa District, but the Chairman of water consumers community had fled with the money and the accountant did not know anything," he said.

He also instructed the National Fund Board to seek for other sources of income instead of depending on the government's funds.

He also said as for now, the ministry has completed the process for its budget and what remained is to evaluate the performance of its workers and every one of them will be held to account.

"I am ready to be regarded as a bad person, but I will not agree for the institution to die in my hands, we must attain national goals in

regard to water provision in both urban and rural areas, the funds provided by the government must be spent according to the existing needs," he said.

Acting RUWASA Director General, Bwai Biseko said by December 2022, a total of 2,273 water infrastructure projects had been constructed and completed through both internal funds and those from development partners.

"The projects are benefitting a total of 11,641,230 people in 4,809 villages, and during the period the construction of seven water dams had been completed," he added.

The minister said in the period beginning July 2019 to September 2022, RUWASA established and registered 2,524 Community-based Water Supply and Management Organisations (CBWSOs) that hired 5,586 experts in technical, accountancy and other fields in order to have water service sustainability.

Biseko said during FY 2023/24 RUWASA plans to implement a total of 1,546 rural water projects including water dams in various areas in the country.



The projects are benefitting a total of 11,641,230 people in 4,809 villages, and during the period of construction of seven water dams had been completed

Chinese, African scientists want climate-resilient food systems for fighting hunger

NAIROBI

CHINESE and African scientists on Monday renewed the call for upscaling farming systems that are in harmony with nature and resilient to climatic shocks in order to overcome hunger and malnutrition.

Speaking at a forum in the Kenyan capital of Nairobi, the scientists acknowledged Africa's growing hunger crisis, stressing that a durable solution hinged on transitioning to climate-smart food production methods.

Yan Zhuang, the director of the International Cooperation Program at the Chinese Academy of Sciences, said combating the climate crisis and other ecological threats in Africa will place the continent on a path to long-term food security, adding that greater South-South cooperation is imperative to boost climate response in Africa and hasten the realization of UN 2030 Sustainable Development Goal 2 on eradicating hunger in the continent.

About 100 Chinese and African scientists are attending the third

conference on climate, ecosystems, and livelihoods taking place in Nairobi to discuss innovative ways to enhance food and nutrition security in Africa.

Convened by the United Nations Environment Programme-International Ecosystem Management Program (UNEP-IEMP), a joint venture between the UNEP and the Chinese Academy of Sciences, the two-day forum will also discuss environmental sustainability as a building block for Africa's ability to feed its citizens in the future.

Aggie Konde, vice president of Program Innovation & Deliver at the Nairobi-based Alliance for Green Revolution in Africa (AGRA), said there was an urgency to climate-proof agricultural systems in the continent, regenerate soil and boost crop yield at the smallholder level. Konde noted that 20 percent of Africa's population, or 282 million people, are food insecure and undernourished, and stressed that scaling up climate adaptation finance and habitat restoration would be key to sustainable food production.

Speedy action on the triple planetary crises of climate change, biodiversity loss, and pollution will be a prerequisite to strengthening the resilience of Africa's food systems, said Susan Gardner, the director of the UNEP's Ecosystems Division.

According to Gardner, greater uptake of nature-positive farming methods will not only guarantee food security in Africa but also hasten the continent's transition to a greener and more resilient future.

Clemens Breisinger, Kenya country program leader and senior research fellow at the Washington DC-based International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI), said establishing resilient agri-food systems in Africa in the face of climate change, pandemic disruptions, and conflicts should be anchored on policy reforms, improved governance and building the capacity of smallholder farmers.



Mbulu district commissioner Kheri James speaks addresses Haydom ward officials yesterday on various issues related to the district's social and economic development. Photo: Correspondent Gift Thadey

Mine hands over 12 latrines to Busisi Secondary School

By Guardian Correspondent,

Sengerema

SOTTA Mining Corporation Limited, the developer of the Nyanzaga Gold project in Sengerema District, Mwanza Region has handed over 12 new lavatories constructed to Busisi Secondary School.

The lavatories will assist 496 students enrolled at the school as well as their teachers who had been previously relying on 4 pit latrines.

The initiative was fully funded by Sotta while construction was undertaken by a local contractor and community based organisation—Wazalendo Group.

The contribution aligns with Sotta's aims to provide corporate social responsibility (CSR) initiatives that assist government and the community.

The initiative is one of many activities being undertaken by Sotta as part of the company's annual CSR plan developed in conjunction with the local communities and

endorsed by the Sengerema District Executive Director.

Sengerema District Education Officer, Amani Tangalo expressed gratitude for the on-going support received from Sotta, urging students to ensure the new lavatories are well maintained for future students.

Sotta's General Manager and Director, Damien Valente stated: "Sotta Mining is committed to building a strong business and a better world, two essential ingredients for long-term success,

and here today we have witnessed government and the private sector working together for the benefit of our shareholders, our employees, our business partners and the communities where we live and work."

SMCL is a joint venture between the government (16 percent) and Nyanzaga Mining Company Limited (84 percent), a subsidiary of OreCorp Tanzania Limited, to develop the Litrn/- project south of Ngoma in the Sengerema District, following the granting of a special mining license on 13 December 2021.

The project is now on track to be the first large scale gold mine to be built in Tanzania in over a decade and the first ever large scale mine in the Sengerema District.



An aerial view of progress in the implementation of the Dar es Salaam rapid transit bus road project, as captured yesterday on a section of the Vingunguti-Gongo la Mboto stretch of Nyerere Road. Photo: Correspondent Jumanne Juma

WAJIBU Institute unveils 2021/22 report

By Guardian Reporter

WAJIBU Institute has unveiled four accountability reports for the year 2021/22 showing that public institutions have had a 43 per cent increase of transactions that have indicators of corruption, embezzlement and fraud.

In the circumstances, the Institute recommends to the government to table a bill in Parliament to establish the Frauds Act to curb corruption.

Submitting extracts of the report, the Institute's project manager, Moses Kimario said the reports have been analyzed in tandem with

the Controller and Auditor General (CAG) Report for the period in question.

He said the increase of the indicators which are yet to be verified by the Prevention and Combating of Corruption Bureau (PCCB) are from the 1.4trn/- for FY 2020/21 to 2.01trn/- in FY 2021/22.

Kimario also recommends that religious institutions should continue to censure corruption and that PCCB reports submitted to the president should be submitted to Parliament for discussion so as to enhance the pace of the fight against corruption in the country.

"The Parliament should also make amendments to the 2007 PCCB Act so as to make its reports transparent to the public, as this will improve and increase public morale in reporting acts of corruption," he said.

Regarding 45 institutions identified by CAG as operating unprofitably, Kimario suggested the Treasury Registrar should investigate them in order to find out ways for them to operate profitably.

Launching the reports, Deputy Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Finance and Planning, Jenifa Omolo said the reports will

help to enhance accountability and transparency to the public in order to curb corruption. "Our nation has made great strides in the war against corruption, even though we need to continue with the war, and that is why nowadays we hear the PCCB concentrating more in the education provision," he said.

He said the government will continue working on the CAG and the issue has been accorded priority.

Earlier, WAJIBU Institute Board Chairman, Yona Killagane said the Institute, in collaboration with other stakeholders endeavour to reach more people to make them understand the concept of accountability.

NOTICE OF DOCUMENT LOSS

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TIN NO: 142-047-217, with Address P.O. Box 9393, Dar es Salaam

Phone +255 747 378 700

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DART welcomes investors to transform Gerezani area

By Correspondent Joseph Mwendapole

THE Dar es Salaam Rapid Transit Agency (DART) has welcomed investors to transform Gerezani area Kariakoo into an international site by investing in modern hotels, shopping malls, modern offices, recreational areas and public spaces.

The opportunities were announced yesterday in Dar es Salaam by the Chief Executive of DART, Dr. Edwin Mhede, during a working session between the agency and officials of the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) and various institutions in the country.

He said they want to turn the Gerezani area into a modern area due to its importance as it will be connecting the four phases of the BRT project so the area will be a meeting point for millions of people in the future.

"We continue to organize ourselves, that's why we are in meetings like this with various development stakeholders like JICA and when we are ready we will announce to the investors so that we can develop the area with joint venture projects," said Dr. Mhede.

He said that even during the Sabasaba season, there are many people in the Gerezani, but they have seen that the area is starting to become small compared to the needs and the large number of people that pass there.

"We have learned from our colleagues who have successfully invested in BRT corridors like Singapore and United Kingdom and we are doing this work in collaboration with various public institutions and that is why here you see representatives of various authorities," said Dr. Mhede.

He said that they will achieve the mission in collaboration with the National Roads Agency (Tanroad), Tanzania Port Authority (TPA), Councils and Municipalities of the City of Dar es Salaam as there are areas where they will have to acquire land for BRT purposes.

He said that in the BRT corridors

they will acquire opportunities for investment in services such as shop buildings, meeting halls and offices and even affordable housing and open spaces.

"When we were designing the DART project in 2005, the goal was only to remove the congestion, but we had not focused on developing our corridors, but later we have come to see that there is a reason to invest in the corridors, that's why we want to make Gerezani international and all the necessary services will be available there," he said.

He said that all over the world, public transport projects do intend transporting people only, but BRT systems are accompanied by large investments in the corridors where the buses pass to enable passengers get various services.

He said JICA is providing education on how to implement the Transit Oriented Development (TOD) project in collaboration with DART and various government institutions to develop a TOD implementation strategy here in Dar es Salaam.

"JICA is helping us to develop guidelines that will reflect our environment by using international experience to make our city smarter and similar to other developed cities in other parts of the world," said Dr. Mhede.

JICA Chief Representative in Tanzania ARA Hitoshi said that the organization has been helping the Tanzanian government in the creation of urban transportation master plan and infrastructure development projects such as improvement of Bagamoyo road, Gerezani Bridge, Mfugale Flyover and many more.

He said the main goal of urban transportation system is to improve transport structures and at the same time to realize appropriate urbanization.

"When we invest near BRT stations the potentiality of that area will be very high and many people would wish to invest in various business that is why we insist that this TOD approach is very important and will be use full to Dar es Salaam City and Tanzania, he said

SADC ministers call for prioritisation of policies and activities on environment, natural resources and tourism industry

By Guardian Reporter

MINISTERS responsible for Environment, Natural Resources and Tourism from the Southern African Development Community (SADC) have called for prioritisation of policies, projects, and activities on environment, natural resources and tourism in the region.

The call was made during the virtual meeting of the ministers responsible for environment, natural resources and tourism held recently to review progress on activities and projects supporting implementation of SADC protocols and strategies to support environment, natural resources and tourism sectors.

Vera Kamtukule, Minister for Tourism in Malawi emphasised the significance of advancing programmes and activities in these sectors, as they have a major impact in shaping our surroundings and play a key role in cultural heritage, as well as significant contribution to socio-economic development.

As outlined in the SADC Regional Indicative Strategic Development Plan (RISDP) (2020-2030) under the pillar of cross-cutting issues, Kamtukule emphasised that these sectors are intertwined and serve a significant role in maintaining the balance of ecosystems, providing habitat for wildlife, plants and animals.

She expressed appreciation to Member States for their unwavering commitment, stating that it demonstrated the utmost significance in efforts to build the SADC we want, which incorporates peace, inclusiveness, competitiveness, a middle-to high-income industrialised region in which SADC citizens enjoy sustainable economic well-being, freedom, and justice.

Ambassador Joseph Nourrice,

SADC Deputy Executive Secretary responsible for Corporate Affairs who represented Elias Magosi, the Executive Secretary of SADC emphasised that sustainable management, conservation and protection of the environment, natural resources, and tourism development are central in the development agenda as prescribed in the RISDP 2020-2030 and the SADC Vision 2050.

Ambassador Nourrice reiterated the urgent need for the SADC region to address challenges such as environmental degradation, climate change impacts, illegal harvesting of natural resources, and under-development of tourism, which are recurrent, pervasive and significantly affecting agriculture, infrastructure, human health, terrestrial and marine ecosystems as well as water resources.

Ministers were updated on the status of signing of the agreement amending the Protocol on Development of Tourism.

They also approved the new board of directors for winding-up the Regional Tourism Organization of Southern Africa (RETOSA).

Regarding the Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs), the ministers noted priorities for the SADC region, and agreed to speak in one voice during negotiations and implementation of decisions from MEAs.

These include Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Flora and Fauna (CITES), Ramsar Convention on Wetlands, United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity (UNCBD), United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), and United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD), among others.



Ten female science teachers from various Tanga city primary and secondary schools (standing, back row) pictured yesterday holding awards presented to them by Next Einstein Forum (NEF) jointly with Tanga-based science centre STEM Park for outstanding performance in the teaching of in science, technology, engineering and mathematics. Seated are NEF and STEM Park officials. Photo: Correspondent Cheji Bakari

Traders call for speedy construction of Tunduma market

By Guardian Correspondent, Tunduma

TRADERS at Majengo Market in Tunduma town call for the construction of the new 1.9bn/-storeyed market to be speeded up in order to increase the value of their goods and create a friendly environment.

Speaking yesterday at different times at the market, they said the environment in which they operate is obsolete; hence construction work for the new market should be speeded.

Joseph Mgode, one of the traders,

praised the government for providing the funds and called for temporary infrastructures at the new area they shift including toilets, lights, water and perimeter fence.

For her part, Zabera Samson, another trader at Majengo Market said when completed, the new storeyed market will attract many more customers from both locally and foreign and will therefore earn foreign currency.

The Market's Secretary, Msafiri Lubava said on the first day a meeting was convened led by Tunduma town Mayor, Ayoub

Mlimba with Councillor Frank Mponzi who explained about the coming of the funds for building a new market.

The meeting also called on the traders to shift to an open area to give room for construction work but they first called for the construction of friendly environment for them at their new site.

Tunduma Town Trade officer, Charles Mazengo said they were lucky to get the funds for building the new market near the border that will also serve neighbouring countries of Zambia and Malawi.

Tunduma Town engineer, Ally Tinga said the market will be a modern one that will add value to the goods being sold therein.

Speaking on behalf of Tunduma Town Director, Tunduma Planning Officer, Brown Galigo said the Town received 1.9bn/- from COMESA member states to build a storeyed structure for the market, that will have more than 2,000 stalls and shop frames, and they are also creating temporary infrastructures to the area where the traders will shift to pave way for construction work.



Sengerema district education officer Amani Tangalo (C) cuts the ribbon at Busisi Secondary School in Sengerema District yesterday to launch and hand over 12 lavatories donated by Sotta Mining Corporation Limited. He is with Busisi councillor Dickson Samuel (L) and the firm's general manager and director, Damien Valente. Photo: Guardian Correspondent

EABC celebrates MSMEs' by highlighting how they help step up economic growth

By Guardian Reporter

THE East African Business Council (EABC) has joined the international community in commemorating the World Micro-small and Medium Enterprises day (MSMEs) highlighting crucial role in driving economic growth.

This year's theme was 'Galvanizing MSMEs worldwide by supporting women and youth entrepreneurship and resilient supply chains' stressing need to empower women and youth in the sector.

EABC has been actively supporting MSMEs through initiatives such as the my e-soko platform which has

provided MSMEs with enhanced visibility, enabling them to market their products and services, network with other stakeholders, and build their capacity to overcome economic shocks that disrupt supply chains.

As the UN emphasizes, global supply chains are vulnerable to conflicts, disasters, and pandemics, making it essential to address these challenges for sustainable trade.

EABC collaborates with development partners, including the International Trade Centre (ITC), Trademark Africa, GIZ, and others, to conduct workshops and webinars that specifically target women and

youth, who form a significant part of the MSME sector.

The initiatives aim to foster innovation, creativity, and decent work opportunities within the EAC and beyond.

Access to financing remains a major obstacle for MSMEs in the EAC and worldwide, thus pushing the council to actively seek partnerships with financial institutions such as Afriexim Bank, Equity Bank, the East African Development Bank, and others.

The partnerships aim to facilitate affordable and accessible financing for MSMEs, thereby enabling their growth and sustainability.

EABC is currently supporting the formation of private sector MSME platforms in Tanzania and Burundi, while strengthening the capacity of existing platforms in other partner states, including the Democratic Republic of Congo.

The approach promotes self-regulation and formalization of MSME businesses, creating a favourable operating environment.

EABC advocates for policies that strengthen the capacities of MSMEs and support their development, particularly for women and youth entrepreneurs.

By addressing barriers, providing an enabling business environment, and aligning with SDGs 1, 4, 5, 8, 9, 10, EABC aims to contribute to the achievement of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its promise to leave no one behind.

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Taking A New Look
At The News
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epaper.ippmedia.comTrim more national parks,
prune some game reserves

FEW voices were heard to differ with the government proposal to reduce Ruaha National Park by upwards of 47,800 hectares and converting the current Kigosi National Park into a forest reserve, to create space for agriculture and livestock rearing. The minister for the portfolio noted that currently, our country exports 1,700 tonnes of honey priced at \$14m, just five percent of the total amount locally produced honey at present. It means more quality, branding and exports.

The issue about economic space is now starting to be realized but it has taken time, with the long standing constitutional formulation that the land belongs to the government being taken literally. That isn't the spirit of the constitution; rather, the president holds custodianship of all land in the United Republic but on behalf of the citizenry. Changing land use isn't a gift but vital adjustment.

Regulatory organisations have usually seen land as theirs, if it is conservation or other public land. All they need is to invoke the formula that the land belongs to the government to create national parks and game reserves or game protected areas at will, ignoring that populations expand. From just upwards of 12m back in 1967, when the first post-independence census was held, to 61.7m at the last count and definitely above 62m people at the moment.

MPs and the minister took time to belabour the point about better land use plans, part of the reason being the need to avoid conflicts among different users, but population increase was missing as a strategic issue. In that case shedding national space for other uses isn't just land use planning

but realism as to accessing land for farming, repeatedly lost sight of in NGO outlooks where animals have primacy. They are seen to be part of nature while communities are intruding on the territory of animals, thus unavoidably causing 'conflicts.'

Instead of just expressing approval for the government gesture, there is need for a proper review of land use, especially the plethora of national parks and other protected or conserved areas. For instance the country needs to push or foster mechanised agriculture for exports and local lowering the price of grain. It can't be done by converting village land to investor use, causing interminable conflicts. Uncontested public land can be put to plantation use, as at that point no traditional users of land would reclaim its heritage, as a right. If at 61m people we have plenty of land conflicts, farming land by 2050 will be a fight.

In debate, lawmakers commended the government for coming up with the decisions to help residents surrounding national parks, wishing for an improved land use plan to prevent conflicts. For one thing, it isn't clear if the legislature at any time dwelt on the results of the national census last August, to set out 'matters arising' and how they can be solved.

Mechanized agro-sector producers need usable reserved land and not converting hereditary lands. Low priced grain fosters industrialization as the price of food sets the premise for a basic usable minimum wage from which grading by rank or profession can then proceed. Cheap grain can't be generated from peasant production as it has too large input of manual labour; it must be reproduced, too.

We must root out
graft at all levels

TANZANIA has scored 38 points out of 100 on the 2022 Corruption Perceptions Index, to become the second least corrupt country within the East African Community (EAC).

The Transparency International (TI), the 2022 Corruption Perceptions Index (CPI) places the country at position 94 globally, having dropped a point from the previous year.

Tanzania, however, managed to maintain its streak in the CPI, after repeating a similar feat from 2020.

The CPI, which ranks 180 countries and territories around the world by their perceived levels of public sector corruption ranks Rwanda at position 54 globally and the first in the region for being the least corrupt nation.

Kenya comes third in the region and 123 globally after scoring 32 points out of a possible 100. The neighbouring country climbed two points from the initial 30 points.

Uganda amassed 22 points to settle for the 142nd position globally and fourth in the region. Burundi comes fifth having collected 17 points from the 19 it had garnered previously.

According to Transparency International, the 2022 CPI shows that most countries are failing to stop corruption. Corruption had made the world a more dangerous place.

The only way out of such a mess according to states to do the hard work, that is rooting out graft at all levels to ensure governments work for all people, and not just an elite few.

Currently, people across the African continent are facing

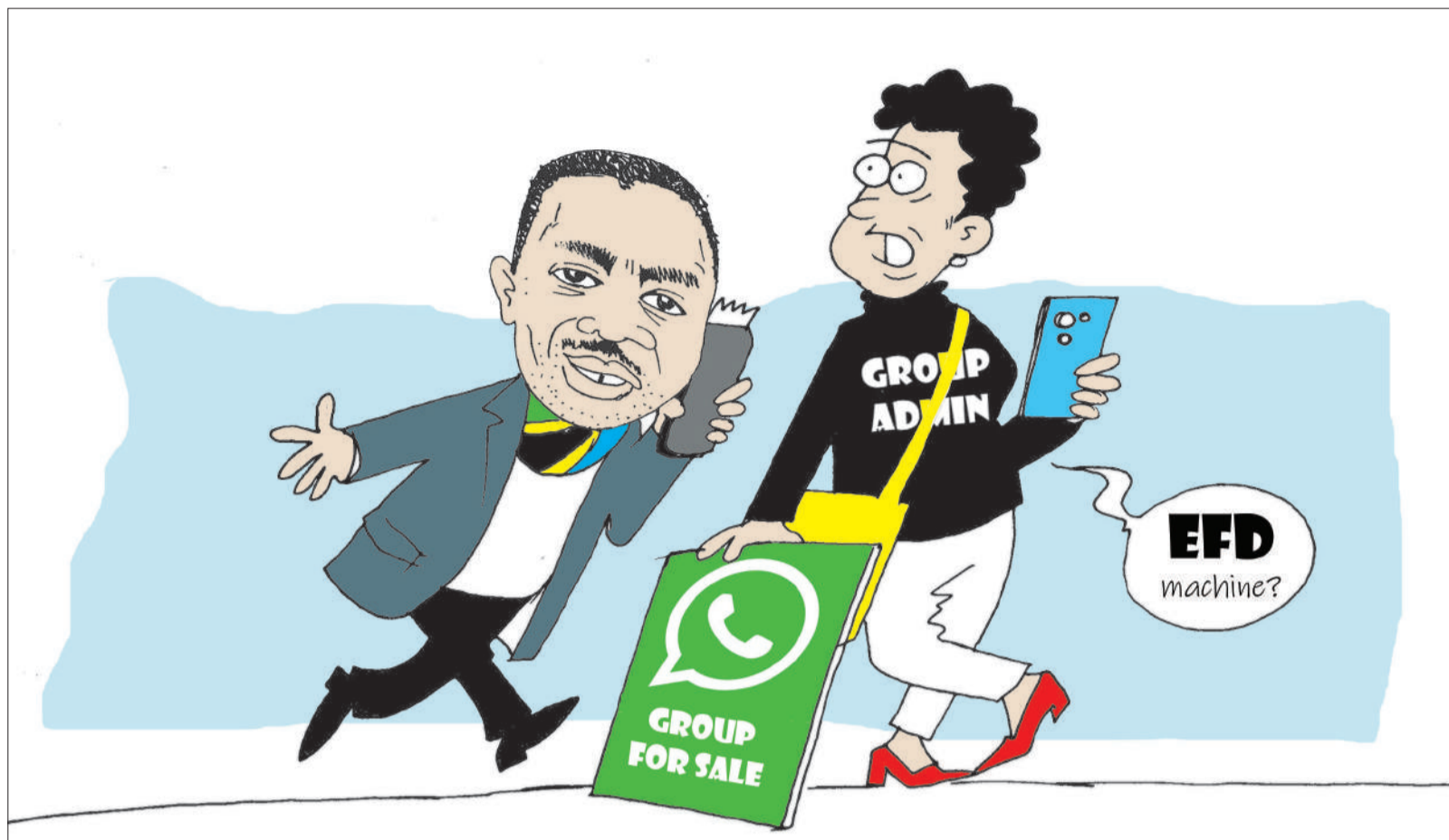
difficulties from every direction with food shortage, rising living costs and numerous ongoing conflicts.

Most governments in the region continued to neglect anti-corruption efforts. Africans need our leaders to go beyond words and commitments and take bold, decisive action to root out pervasive corruption at this key moment, or the situation will only continue to deteriorate. Governments must open up space to include the public in decision-making - from activists and business owners to marginalised communities and young people.

In democratic societies, the people can raise their voices to help root out corruption and demand a safer world for us all. The CPI ranks 180 countries and territories around the world by their perceived levels of public sector corruption.

Both grand and petty corruption are serious problems in Tanzania yet various comprehensive laws are in place to prevent corruption. It is largely due to a weak internal control and low or non-compliance with anti-corruption regulations within different government agencies. For instance, public procurement, taxation, and customs service are areas that are prone to corruption.

Foreign companies have identified that corruption within those sectors poses potential obstacles for doing business in Tanzania as bribes are often demanded. It is also believed that the existing large informal sector is associated with cumbersome business registration process which has created opportunities for corruption.



Why people in government are corrupt, and why nothing might change

By Sunday Adelaja

MOST Nigerians are excited for the few days in office of President Bola Ahmed Tinubu and how he has performed so far. However, one striking revelation is the amount of revelations of corruption in Buhari's government despite his well pronounced anti corruption government. It is almost like all the good people who go into government end up coming out corrupt. When is Nigeria going to get it right? When are we going to get rid of corruption in government? When will the right people come into government in Nigeria?

This brings me to what I believe is the biggest problem of Nigeria. The biggest problem of Nigeria are Nigerians, all of us, we mostly live without a consciously defined system of values.

When I observe the first few steps of President Tinubu I can clearly see the big boldness and faith of Asiwaju and his economic ingenuity to turn things around for good for the country. I'm afraid this will end up doing a similar thing to what the former finance Minister Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala used to do by quoting all the right figures of GDP growth, micro and macroeconomics etc., yet without any major transformation in the country. Unfortunately this is the economic philosophy the Buhari government also adopted. For some reasons generations of Nigerian leaders have put their faith more in some supposedly genius economic formulas than in building the core moral character of the people. The fact is that no matter what brilliant economic formulas we come up with, it is ordinary citizens that must live these things out daily in their workplaces and private lives. If the moral fabric of the people is collapsed as we currently have it in Nigeria, the people will end of sabotaging even the best initiatives. The only government that had a relative success in this area to mend was the Buhari/Idiagbon regime before they were butted out of office.

Without purposefully instilling high level morals and values in the generality of our people, the same people will end up dismantling anything you build no matter how glorious it is. Just as we see some Nigerians destroying and stealing the rails from the newly constructed railway lanes. Without a coordinated system of values to be systematically imparted to the totality of Nigerians, sabotage, theft and destruction of national assets won't stop even if we have the best military and police services in the world. A recent discovery of oil bunkering syndicates across the country is another proof that the

problem of Nigeria is in Nigerians who live in their country without any understanding of values and virtues. Someone must cry out loud for all aspiring leaders of Nigeria to hear this principles of life that:

The intangible is more important than the tangible. The content of character of our people is far more important than all our natural resources that we so much eulogise endlessly.

The internal values of our people are more important than the external prosperity.

We must know that some things are more important than life itself: principles, values, character, standards. It is the people who have these qualities that go ahead to build great nations. When these things are lost we lose ourselves individually and as a nation. Those who live by values do rule the earth, because they have a superior inner morals and values.

Reading through the APC Manifesto I noticed that there was not a single policy consideration to reform our moral fabric as a nation. This to me speaks about the fact that this next group of rulers are again missing what is the major problem of our nation, which is our collapsed value system. As a matter of fact I'm not sure it was ever well formulated to the ordinary Nigerian in our history. The government of Shagari actually attempted to draw up a value system for the nation, but they were soon overthrown.

Any government that wants to rescue Nigeria must come up with a whole system of values that will effectively address the moral failure of our society. This is our greatest problem as a country. It is out of this we have all other issues including leadership failure. The point I am trying to pass across is that leadership is not the biggest problem of Nigeria. Our biggest problem is a corrupt value system. In the past few years I have personally taken it upon myself to develop a set of values for the Nigerian nation. I ended up with 20 of them. We have National orientation agency in Nigeria, we have National institute for policy and strategic studies in Nigeria, these national organisations and others must be tasked to come up with a fully developed set of value systems to give the correct orientation to every citizen of Nigeria.

National values are a set of core principles ingrained into the mental and social structures of society, which help to dictate the action and behaviour of the citizenry. These are qualities, principles and behaviours every nation holds in high esteem as it seeks to achieve its ultimate objectives.

Let's get this straight. There is no point waiting for a miracle from the Tinubu presidency if he and his team don't incorporate this in their

programs. A miracle didn't happen despite the best efforts of this APC government of Muhammadu Buhari, no need to wait for such miracles from Tinubu's government if the right things are not done. Please let me prove this to you through an illustration. Any nation could be viewed as a pot from where the most active, zealous or talented representatives of this given society emerge as their leaders. If the pot therefore is corrupt, only corrupt leaders will come out of that pot. If the pot however is clean and righteous and everybody in that nation is living by righteous value systems, naturally the leaders that will be coming out of that pot will reflect the nature and the environment of the pot itself. They will be clean, they will be trustworthy and they will be righteous. This is the reason you dear reader will probably not be able to mention as little as ten heads of states presently in Europe. Because they don't need to have super leaders, since the societies are averagely upright, so it doesn't matter much who becomes the leader, anyone you pick will perform in accordance to the upright standards of the countries.

If the generality of our people are corrupt in their values then this will be reflected in all areas of our society. Bad behaviour will manifest its ugly heads everywhere from bottom to the top. There will be evil and corrupt citizens everywhere. In such a situation even if the president is Jesus Christ himself yet the majorly corrupt citizens will sabotage his best efforts. As long as the masses of the citizens lack the moral virtues necessary for progress and development the best efforts of leaders will amount to nothing. As long as our leaders on every level is produced from this society whose moral values are completely broken down it means only morally broken leaders could emerge.

The society will always produce leaders that reflect the state of that society. If it's a morally and ethically healthy society then these are the type of leaders that will emerge. If the society is corrupt and the thinking of ordinary citizens is that of selfishness, egocentrism and instant gratification then these are the types of leaders who will emerge to become their rulers.

There is sometimes an exemption from this trend though. That is when a remnant leader manages to prove his or her worth to convince the people of the nation of his good intentions. In such a situation when the populace accepts such an exceptional leader, his most important duty must be to change the nature of the pot by changing the value system of the nation. Our leaders come from our societies. The leadership of any nation is only

but a reflection of the prevailing value systems of that society. So if a nation is corrupt, it will only produce corrupt leaders because the citizenry in general live by corrupt values in their daily lives and endeavors.

An unclean pot will keep on reproducing an unclean content. If the value systems of Nigeria and Nigerians don't change, we will keep on recycling and reproducing only those types of leaders we are seeing so far. Miracles will not happen, leaders are neither angels nor spirits. They live and grow from among the people; their existence is given expression and influenced by happenings in the environment where they live. Expecting leaders who live in a largely corrupt and morally lax society to live above board while shying away from the urgent task to change and orientate the citizenry will only amount to putting the cart before the horse.

The greatest challenge for Nigerians who desire to see a changed society is to focus first on their value systems as a people. If the value systems of the citizens are right, they would not select corrupt or bad leaders. For example, in societies where there are good moral values, people would not elect corrupt politicians or collect money to get the wrong people into office. Even if a corrupt politician finds his way by hook or by crook into the government, since the moral values of the masses contradict the corrupt values of the politician, he would be exposed and easily dismissed.

Therefore what we need in Nigeria and Africa in general is not just a good messianic leader, but a good set of virtues and value systems in the masses that would make them abhor and reject any manifestation of corruption in their leaders and would-be leaders. Thus, we should not expect, and we will not have the kind of improvements or the leadership that we seek as a nation if we don't work on our value system.

For example, under the late Umaru Musa Yar Adua's administration, there was a bold step made towards changing the negative perception of Nigeria both locally and internationally through the Rebranding Project. Unfortunately, this brilliant program failed to achieve its set objectives because it did not first attempt to establish and promote good national values in the citizens within the country. Rebranding is not the issue, the issue is to change the contents of character of our citizens, when we become people of virtues, we will be automatically rebranded all over the world.

Sunday Adelaja is a Nigeria born leader, transformation strategist, pastor and innovator. He was based in Kiev Ukraine

Emotional and social stability of students key for effective learning

There are learners who come from broken families where they are deprived of basic needs and an opportunity to socialize so as to build emotional stability, yet they are expected to perform well. That is why teachers' training colleges and universities that offer education courses put much emphasis on units touching on psychology and sociology. For, issues such as family separation affect individuals' interactions and upbringing.

The situation becomes worse when a child does not live with any of the parents. Some live with grandparents who are known for spoiling their grandchildren while others live with distant relatives who do not care about the interest of such children.

With all these challenges, teachers are tasked to and expected to fill the vacuum that exists for children emotionally and socially. Teachers have to provide a comfortable environment to enable such learners to grasp the intended knowledge and skills.

Apart from challenges emanating from family background, there are others which emerge due to differences in personalities and talents hence varying levels of performance in studies and other extracurricular activities.

A school provides a platform for individuals to display their abilities

in several aspects and areas. This opportunity to display abilities may have some results which are not pleasant in some considerations.

Some learners may lose confidence and limit their level of interaction after realizing that they are not strong in certain subjects or areas where others excel. This situation may affect their emotional and social stability which is very necessary for their lives at school and in the society. At this points, it is the duty of a keen teacher to identify such learners and stabilize them.

A teacher needs to spot and enable such learners to build or regains lost self-reconciliation that helps them to be confident and move on with life without worry. Learners need to be made aware that human beings are of different abilities and talents, and everyone can become successful if they focus on their abilities and talents.

Because to be a teacher means to be a permanent learner, teachers should always update themselves on sociology and psychology for them to be effective in application of these interrelated disciplines in education. They need to relate what they learnt from colleges to what they experience so as to advance their ways of administering guidance and counseling in education for positive results.

For teachers to effectively help learners build emotional and social stability, they need to make



sure that they keep secrets told to them by learners. For, like everyone else, students become more comfortable sharing their life experiences with teachers when they are assured of confidentiality.

Promoting interaction

For learners to perform well in their studies and have healthy living in a school environment, they must interact. Useful interaction is made possible when learners are

emotionally and socially stable. When learners interact, they reduce the possibility of being affected by stress.

A school should not create loneliness to learners. Instead, it should bring comfort and hope. It is through interactions that learners discover their strengths and weaknesses and those of their colleagues which allow them to devise means of coping with their challenging situations.

Increased cooperation in learning

It is not possible for every learner to fully understand every lesson. Others only understand well when they later on discuss what the teacher taught. This shows that emotional and social stability is important as it is the catalyst for enhancing relationships in school.

Without cooperation, objectives of education cannot be realized. Therefore, it is

very important for teachers to take into account the role of emotional and social stability in the learning process because it is hard for learners with emotional and social challenges to effectively relate with others. Learning is cooperating.

Building resilience

Life creates challenges which make us fail or discouraged and slowed

down in terms of our progress. As failing should not mean the end of the struggle, teachers need to make sure that they build resilience for the learners. This can be a success if they prioritize building learners' emotional and social stability. We have to learn from others so as to succeed. How can this be achieved if we do not relate effectively with others due to emotional and social instability?

Developing talents

There are individuals who succeed due to their education and those who succeed due to use of their talents. It is through effective interactions that talents are discovered. In this way, people invest in areas which can bring results.

When individuals register success due to their talents, they become emotionally and socially stable even if they have not done well in other areas. Normally, an individual may be blamed for not registering success in any aspect and not in all aspects.

Learning is behavioural activity involving emotions and social interaction. For effective teaching and learning process, emotional and social stability of a learner is of paramount importance. If we don't consider emotional and social aspects in education, we may incur a huge loss of talented individuals and experts. Teaching is creating emotionally and socially stable learners.

BY AZZA KARAM

When the United Nations gets involved in matters religion

For the last 30 odd years, I have maintained that religions matter. I noted the reasons for why they matter, and always listed how they matter – as social service providers, as first responders in humanitarian crisis; as mediators in tensions and conflicts, as upholders of common good and the values of humanity; as protectors of children and of the most vulnerable; and even as political actors.

All to name but a few. I still feel amused when some of those I trained among the UN staff and the faith-based NGO community, quote something I said, in public – albeit without even being aware they are quoting (I am trying to be kind here) – such as: “we should not be talking about whether religions matter, but how they matter”.

In 2007, while at UNDP, I was told, more than once, “we do not do religion”. By the time I left the UN in 2020, after building two bodies – an Interagency Task Force on Religion and its Multi Faith Advisory Council – it was clear that almost all UN entities were competing to ‘do religion’. In fact, some UN entities are competing for religious funding.

While I have not lost that faith in faith itself, over the last years, I have grown increasingly incredulous of those who would speak in the name of ‘religion’. It is hard not to feel distinctly bemused, when versions of ‘if religious actors/leaders are not at the [policy] table, they will be on the menu’, are being told in one gathering after another.

Often by the same kinds of speakers, among the same kinds of audiences, albeit meeting more and more frequently – and often more lavishly – in different cities around the world.

The reason for bemusement, is not disillusion with the unparalleled roles that various religious institutions and communities of faith play. Far from it. These roles are, in short, vast. In fact, they are as impossible to quantify, as they are implausible to assume full comprehension of.

After all, how do you accurately measure the pulse of our individual spiritualities – let alone our collective sense thereof? Religious leaders, religious institutions, faith-based and faith-inspired NGOs (FBOs) – let alone faith communities – are massive in number, and



An Interfaith Moment of Prayer for Peace at UN Headquarters in April 2023 where Secretary-General António Guterres said the gathering was taking place at a unique moment: on the last Friday of Ramadan, as Christians celebrate Easter, Jews mark the end of Passover, and Sikhs enjoy the festival of Vaisakhi. “Even the calendar is sending a message of unity,” he remarked. “Today, at this blessed moment of renewal across faiths, let us lift our hearts and voices for peace – our guiding star and our most precious goal.” Credit: UN Photo/Eskinder Debebe

permeate all the world's edifices, peoples and even languages. Faiths, and expressions of religiosity, are likely as numerous as the hairs on an average head (not counting those who may be lacking vigour in that department).

No, the reason for bemusement is disillusionment with the trend of commercialisation of religion, the business of ‘doing religion’. The emerging marketplace of “religion and [fill in the blanks - and anything is possible]” is reminiscent of not too many decades ago, when so many academics, consultants, think tanks, NGOs, worked on the business of democracy and/or good governance and/or human rights. Then, as now, projects, programmes, initiatives, meetings, and more meetings, were hosted.

A global emerging elite of ‘experts’ in the above (or variations thereof) permeated the four and five-star hotel meeting rooms, gave business to caterers and confer-

ence centres as they traipsed the ‘conference circuits’ from north to south, populated proposals to governments, philanthropists and various donor entities.

They defined the missions of for-profit consultancies claiming to enable the strategic capabilities, to inform the media presences, to refine the narratives, to provide the leadership coaching, to jointly express the common values, to uphold the good in public service... And so on.

We are not living in better democracies now, in spite of all that business. Will we have more faithful societies? Will people pray more, for one another and serve more selflessly now that ‘religion’ is in? Somehow, I doubt it.

By the time we realised the extent of the commercialisation of democracy and human rights, the commercial nature had corrupted much of the sagacity – and the necessary courage – there was. Even autocrats bought into the business

of doing democracy and human rights, and used the narratives to enhance their respective agendas.

Few democratic actors worked together, and even fewer collaborated to serve – and save – the whole of humanity. As with any business venture, the motive of profit – and power – of some, dominated.

And rather than a consolidated civil society effort holding decision makers accountable for the sake of the most vulnerable, and collectively and successfully eliminating the tools of harm, we are living in the era where money, weapons – including nuclear ones – control over resources, and war (including war on this earth), dominate.

Today, some of the most authoritarian and self-serving regimes, and some of the most power-seeking individuals, and their retinues, are vested in the business of ‘religion’. And why not? It is among the most lucrative domains of financial, political and social influence.

Decades of study, however, point to some simple questions to ask, to distinguish the transactional nature of ‘religious affairs’ claiming to be for the good of all, from those actually serving the common good.

The questions include the following:

How many of those engaged in the work of religion (whether as religious or secular actors) actually give of or share, their varied resources, to/with one another (including those from other/different religions, entities, age groups, countries, races, etc.)?

How many different religious organisations plan and deliver, jointly, the same set of services to the same set of needs, in the same neighborhoods or in the same countries?

How many ‘religious actors’ actually partner with ‘secular’ civil society organisations to hold institutions of political and financial power equally accountable – if need be, at cost to their own welfare. In other words, how many stand on principle, irrespective of the cost?

And, my personal favourite: what are these religious actors’ respective positions on women’s rights, on gender equality and/or on women’s leadership?

The more diplomatic way to frame that is also one of the most powerful litmus tests: which human rights do these actors working on/with/for religion, value more? You see, those who are engaged in transactional practices wearing a religious garb, will invariably prioritise some rights, or some privileges, over others.

The answer to this question therefore, will indicate the difference between a coalition of religious fundamentalists (including secular power seekers and some religious and political leaders), and a multilateral alliance dedicated to serving the common good – for each and all, barring none, especially in the most challenging of times.

Azza Karam is a Professor of Religion and Development at the Vrije Universiteit of Amsterdam and served as a member of the UN Secretary General’s High Level Advisory Board on Effective Multilateralism.

BY BAHER KAMAL

Huge increase in transnational crime in Asia's 'Golden Triangle'



HOW come that in a world where technology is -or is about to be- able to detect an ant in a jungle, the traffickers of death continue to carry out their lucrative criminal activities everywhere and in all fields, from weapons to prostitution, enslavement and drugs, to deadly fake medicines, through oil, gas and poisoned food.

In the specific case of Asia, a specialised organisation reports the Asian 'Golden Triangle' is where historically opium was grown to produce heroin for export, but where, in recent years, the trade of "even deadlier and more profitable synthetic drugs have taken over.

In its June 2023 report, the UN Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) informs that East and Southeast Asian synthetic drug supply remains at 'extreme levels' and diversifies.

The report, "Synthetic Drugs in East and Southeast Asia: latest developments and challenges 2023", confirms an expansion and diversification of synthetic drug production and trafficking in the region, while trafficking routes have shifted significantly.

"Thailand, Laos and Myanmar are at the frontlines of illicit trade in Asia dominated by transnational organised crime syndicates."

Methamphetamine, ketamine and many more

'High volumes' of methamphetamine continue to be produced and trafficked in and from the region while the production of ketamine and other synthetic drugs has expanded.

"Transnational organised crime groups anticipate, adapt and try to circumvent what governments do, and in 2022 we saw them work around Thai borders in the Golden Triangle more than in the past," said Jeremy Douglas, UNODC Regional Representative for Southeast Asia and the Pacific.

'Unwanted' to be seen

"Traffickers have continued to ship large volumes through Laos and northern Thailand, but at the same time they have pushed significant supply through central Myanmar to the Andaman Sea where it seems few were looking."

Douglas added that criminal groups from across the region also started moving and re-connecting after lengthy pandemic border closures, with late 2022 and early 2023 patterns starting to look similar to 2019.

Hidden in "legal products"

Moreover, synthetic drugs containing a mixture of substances and sometimes "packaged alongside legal products" continue to be found throughout East and Southeast Asia, with serious health consequences for those who knowingly, or unknowingly, consume the products.

Moreover, the world drug problem is a complex issue that affects millions of people worldwide.

Many people who use drugs face stigma and discrimination, which can further harm their physical and mental health and prevent them from accessing the help they need, the UN warns on the occasion of the 2023 Inter-

In the United States and Canada, overdose deaths, predominantly driven by an epidemic of the non-medical use of fentanyl, continue to break records. Credit: Shutterstock.

national Day Against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking (26 June).

"Unprecedented" increase

The increase in the production of synthetic drugs in recent years has been "unprecedented" according to the UNODC Regional Representative.

It is not just drugs which are being trafficked across the region: chemical precursors to manufacture synthetic drugs are being illegally transported into Myanmar in quantities far larger than the drugs that are trafficked out, UNODC further explains.

Trafficking also in people, wildlife, timber and so on

In fact, a myriad of cross-border issues, including drug and precursor chemical trafficking, migrant smuggling, human trafficking, wildlife and forestry crime, and, in some locations, the movement of terrorist fighters alongside public health

and pandemic-related matters.

The impact of legalising the use of cocaine

Cannabis legalisation in parts of the world appears to have accelerated daily use and related health impacts, according to the World Drug Report 2022, which also details record rises in the manufacturing of cocaine, the expansion of synthetic drugs to new markets, and continuing gaps in the availability of drug treatments, especially for women.

According to the report, around 284 million people aged 15-64 used drugs worldwide in 2020, a 26% increase over the previous decade.

"In Africa and Latin America, people under 35 represent the majority of people being treated for drug use disorders."

Globally, the report estimates that 11.2 million people worldwide were injecting drugs. Around half of this number were living with hep-

atitis C, 1.4 million were living with HIV, and 1.2 million were living with both.

Reacting to these findings, UNODC Executive Director, Ghada Waly stated: "Numbers for the manufacturing and seizures of many illicit drugs are hitting record highs, even as global emergencies are deepening vulnerabilities."

At the same time, misperceptions regarding the magnitude of the problem and the associated harms are depriving people of care and treatment and driving young people towards harmful behaviour, said Waly.

Key trends by region

In many countries in Africa and South and Central America, the largest proportion of people in treatment for drug use disorders are there primarily for cannabis use disorders. In Eastern and South-Eastern Europe and in Central Asia, people are most often in treatment for opioid use disorders.

In the United States and

Canada, overdose deaths, predominantly driven by an epidemic of the non-medical use of fentanyl, continue to break records. Preliminary estimates in the United States point to more than 107,000 drug overdose deaths in 2021, up from nearly 92,000 in 2020.

Conflict zones magnets for synthetic drug production

This year's report also highlights that illicit drug economies can flourish in situations of conflict and where the rule of law is weak, and in turn can prolong or fuel conflict.

Information from the Middle East and South-East Asia suggest that conflict situations can act as a magnet for the manufacture of synthetic drugs, which can be produced anywhere. This effect may be greater when the conflict area is close to large consumer markets.

Historically, parties to conflict have used drugs to finance conflict and generate income. The 2022 World

Drug Report also reveals that conflicts may also disrupt and shift drug trafficking routes, as has happened in the Balkans and more recently in Ukraine.

A possible growing capacity to manufacture amphetamine in Ukraine

According to the UNODC report, "there was a significant increase in the number of reported clandestine laboratories in Ukraine, skyrocketing from 17 dismantled laboratories in 2019 to 79 in 2020. 67 out of these laboratories were producing amphetamines, up from five in 2019 - the highest number of dismantled laboratories reported in any given country in 2020."

Gender treatment gap

Women remain in the minority of drug users globally yet tend to increase their rate of drug consumption and progress to drug use disorders more rapidly than men do. Women now represent an estimated 45-49% of users of amphetamines and non-medical users of pharmaceutical stimulants, pharmaceutical opioids, sedatives, and tranquillisers.

The treatment gap remains large for women globally. Although women represent almost one in two amphetamine users, they constitute only one in five people in treatment for amphetamine use disorders.

The World Drug Report also spotlights the wide range of roles fulfilled by women in the global cocaine economy, including cultivating coca, transporting small quantities of drugs, selling to consumers, and smuggling into prisons.

Rohingya camps become dengue hotspots in Bangladesh

BY RAFIQUL ISLAM

WITH the monsoon in Bangladesh, Rohingya refugee camps in Cox's Bazar have emerged as a dengue hotspot, with the mosquito-borne disease continuing to spread among the stateless refugees.

"A total of 1,066 dengue cases were reported in highly cramped refugee camps in Cox's Bazar up to May 23 this year, while the case tally was only 426 among the local community there," Dr Nazmul Islam, Director of Disease Control and Line of the Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS), said.

However, the latest data of the DGHS revealed that 1,283 people were infected with and 26 people died of dengue in the Rohingya camps and surrounding host community in Ukhiya and Teknaf upazilas of Cox's Bazar from January 1 to June 6, 2023.

Nazmul said the dengue infection rate is highest in the Rohingya camps.

"Rohingya camps in Cox's Bazar have the highest number of dengue patients. Last year, over 17,000 dengue patients were identified there. The number of dengue patients is so high this year, too," he said.

Official data showed that dengue cases increased significantly in 2022 when the monsoon started. Experts fear the dengue situation will be more acute in the Rohingya camps during the monsoon this year.

Bangladesh witnessed its largest influx of Rohingya refugees in 2017 following a military crackdown in the Rakhine State of Myanmar. According to UNHCR, about 773,972 Rohingya people entered the country as refugees, totaling nearly 10 million with



With the monsoon refugees in the cramped camps in Cox's Bazar are expected to be impacted by an increase of dengue, which last year accounted for 1,283 cases in the Rohingya camps. Credit: Rafiqul Islam/IPS

the previous influxes.

The forcibly displaced Rohingyas took shelter in overcrowded makeshift camps where they lacked access to civic amenities, including education, food, clean water, and proper sanitation, and also face natural disasters and infectious disease transmission.

"Most refugees have no adequate access to clean water,

sanitary facilities, or health-care. The monsoon season also poses a huge threat to thousands of Rohingya families living in makeshift shelters as dengue outbreak emerges in camps during the period," said Ro Arafat, a Rohingya refugee.

Nazmul said Rohingya refugees live in a limited space in the camps where there is not

enough scope to runoff rainwater, so stagnant water creates an enabling environment for the breeding Aedes mosquito, carrier of the dengue virus.

He said the risk of dengue infections climbs in densely populated areas. With the monsoon, the dengue situation could turn dangerous in the refugee camps.

Dr Iqbal Kabir, Professor and Director at the Climate Change and Health Promotion Unit, the Ministry of Health, Bangladesh, said in recent years, environmental changes have been markedly observed throughout the globe, and there is no exception in Bangladesh.

"The nature of the Aedes mosquito is that it must bite five humans to suck blood as per its demand, and an Aedes mosquito lays more than 200 eggs a time. Once they get suitable humidity and temperature, mosquito breeding occurs," Kabir said.

He observed that dengue spreads very fast, but the authorities have not controlled dengue infections in the highly-crowded refugee camps in Cox's Bazar.

During the monsoon, Bangladesh experiences spikes in dengue outbreaks. In 2022, 17 refugees died from dengue infections in Rohingya camps. Despite having a high dengue infection rate in the camps, lack of awareness about the virus and the absence of prompt diagnosis of the disease make the Rohingya refugees more vulnerable.

"An Aedes mosquito can infect many within seconds, and keeping densely populated refugee camps safe from mosquitoes is really difficult. So there is a high possibility of a severe outbreak in the refugee

camps," said Mahbubur Rahman, Civil Surgeon, and Chief Health Officer for Cox's Bazar.

Urgent action needed

The burden of dengue is related to the changes in rainfall patterns. The rainfall pattern has been changed. Pre-monsoon erratic rainfall is linked with the increase of vectors.

Unusual rainfall occurred in Cox's Bazar area earlier this year, triggering dengue outbreaks in the camps.

Kabir said the dengue national guideline should be revisited to check dengue outbreaks across the country, including Rohingya camps.

He suggested launching a crash programme to prevent dengue infections in Rohingya camps; if clustering could be ensured, it would be easy to deal with the dengue situation there. Golam Rabbani, head of BRAC's Climate Bridge Fund, said the Bangladesh government should initiate research and increase the authorities' capacity to tackle any future outbreak of dengue in the country.

He says the Department of Public Health and the DGHS should identify dengue as one of the most climate-sensitive diseases and improve their disease profile, suggesting the government initiate investment and policy interventions to address the dengue in Bangladesh.

IPS UN Bureau Report

By Lusekelo Philemon

TFRA to promote investment opportunities during the DITF

AS the 47th edition of Dar es Salaam International Trade Fair (DITF) kicks off, the Tanzania Fertilizer Regulatory Authority (TFRA) aims to showcase its activities and investment opportunities in the fertiliser sub-sector.

This year's event is themed: "Tanzania is the Right Place for Business and Investment", and TFRA executive director, Dr Stephan Ngailo said in an interview that the event is scheduled for almost two weeks (June 28 to July 13, 2023) and that will give the authority an avenue to inform the public on what it has been offering in the industry's value chain.

During the trade fair, TFRA will also inform all stakeholders in the agricultural value chain including prospective investors on potential areas that need investment in fertiliser and associated investments.

Dr Ngailo said: "We want to use this DITF platform to interact with stakeholders in the agriculture value chain on various issues particularly at a time when the authority is working on how the subsidized fertiliser scheme has succeed and helped farmers realize their dreams."

He said that last season there were a number of success stories and some hiccups, "that's why we want to use the trade fair to boldly address some of the issues so that the programme is well understood to the agro-dealers including farmers and make the sector grow."

According to Ngailo, the subsidy fertiliser programme aimed at reducing the cost of fertiliser in order to increase production and productivity in agriculture, strengthen food security and increase the availability of industrial raw materials.

"That's why this trade fair is a good avenue to mingle and interact with agro-dealers and all people who are in the fertiliser value chain," the official said.

The implementation of the subsidy programme in the 2022/2023 season has contributed to the increase in the use of fertiliser by farmers from 173,000 tonnes (February, 2022) to 322,000 tonnes (February, 2023).

Dr Ngailo further noted that with the continued decline in the



TFRA executive director Dr Stephen Ngailo (R), in one of the fertiliser warehouses in Njombe Municipality recently.

price of fertiliser in the world market and the increase in consumption, the government is determined to continue providing subsidized fertiliser to increase production and strengthen food security in the country.

In the 2023/2024 fiscal year, TFRA has developed a guideline that can make the programme easily executed to all players in the agricultural sector.

The authority's top boss said that the procedure for the provision of subsidized fertilisers aims to achieve the use of 450,000 tonnes of fertiliser.

"The provision of subsidies will take into account the real needs of the farmer according to the registration information and the allocated government budget," Dr Ngailo said.

"We've developed a guideline on how to give farmers subsidised fertiliser to

boost crop production in the 2023/2024 farming season," he said, noting that the manual has specified the responsibility of each stakeholder in the registration, management, delivery and receipt of subsidized fertilisers for farmers.

He however said that in the year 2023/2024, the electronic system will use digital fertiliser subsidy distribution and payment system to coordinate the implementation of the subsidy program.

The system will be used to register or verify the information of important stakeholders including farmers, importers and producers of fertilisers, fertiliser agents as well as making sales. Registration, distribution, claims and verification will be done digitally.

How the system will work: Dr Ngailo said that due to the experience of the implemen-

tation of fertilizer subsidy to farmers for the 2022/2023 season, the electronic system has been improved to meet the actual implementation of subsidy to farmers.

Considering the improvements made, the provision of fertiliser subsidies to farmers in the 2023/2024 season will be based on the following procedures which include importers/producers registered in accordance with the guidelines and registration procedure will be given identification numbers to confirm their participation, along with those numbers they will be given the ability to enter the system through their portal.

The fertiliser expert also stated that under the programme, importers /producers will distribute fertilizers to sales centers and agents registered and given specific identification numbers. "The

exercise will involve the delivery and reception of the load in the system (stock in and out). Stock will be monitored from the level of the Fertilizer Control Authority (TFRA) to the farmer. Importers/producers, agents and all sales centers will not be allowed to sell subsidized fertilizer outside of this process," Dr Ngailo said.

In line with the subsidy programme, a farmer who is registered and verified his information will go to the fertiliser distribution agency/center to show the identification number so that he can buy fertiliser; agent will also enter the farmer's identification number into the system and check the information (full name, area he comes from, size of the farm, number of bags of fertilizer he should be given at that time) before selling him fertilizer and after entering the farmer in the portal, the

agent will scan the QR code of the fertiliser bag.

He further stated that the government provides subsidized fertilizers to farmers so that they can buy fertilizers at affordable prices and enable them to increase production and productivity, strengthen food security and increase farmers' income. Therefore, it is the responsibility of all stakeholders to fully perform their duties in order to achieve the intended goals.

Dr Ngailo noted that the government encourages the cooperation of stakeholders at all levels to ensure that the subsidized fertiliser programme is implemented effectively. "This guide can be improved according to the needs for successful implementation of the grant programme."

In Tanzania, there is currently one fertiliser manu-

facturing factory, three fertiliser supplements manufacturing factories, and sixteen small-scale manufacturers producing liquid fertilizers known as foliar fertiliser.

Despite the presence of a single fertilizer factory in the country—Minjingu Fertiliser Factory there are major investment projects underway including Investment by ITRACOM Fertiliser Company.

ITRACOM investor from Burundi is investing in a Phosphate and Manure Fertiliser Factory in Nala industrial area in Dodoma region where he has been allocated an area of 21 hectares. The project will cost US\$180 million.

The factory will be able to produce 600,000 metric tonnes of fertilizer and fertilizer supplements amounting to 300,000 metric tonnes per year. When completed, the investment will provide 3,000 direct and indirect jobs in the fertilizer business chain.

On Minjingu fertilizer factory expansion, Dr Ngailo said the existing Minjingu Company fertilizer factory with a capacity of 100,000 metric tonnes of fertilizer is in the process of expansion to increase the production capacity of fertilizer to 300,000 metric tons per year. The expansion will involve the creation of about 500 jobs.

TFRA is a state-owned entity under the Ministry of Agriculture established by the Fertilizer Act of 2009, whose main role is to control the quality and trade of fertilizer and fertilizer supplements (FFS) in the entire value chain including manufacturing, storage, imports, distribution and export.

It is also meant to promote investment in fertiliser domestic manufacturing to ensure farmers' timely access to fertiliser at affordable prices and minimize dependence on imported fertiliser.

By Guardian Reporter

TCRA highlights regulations for deceased mobile phones

TANZANIA Communications Regulatory Authority (TCRA) has issued a statement shedding light on the regulations surrounding mobile phone users who have passed away.

Rolf Kibaja, TCRA's acting head of communication and public relations said in an interview that the importance of following proper procedures to preserve the digital legacy of deceased individuals.

Kibaja stated: "We recognise the significance of mobile phone users' digital legacies and the need to safeguard their valuable information. It is crucial that authorized representatives and family members understand and adhere to the regulations in place to ensure the preservation and privacy of the deceased's phone line."

When a mobile phone user passes away, their phone number is returned to the respective mobile network operator.

Kibaja further said: "However, the number can only be reassigned to another individual if the executor of the estate fails to present the necessary documents identifying them as the authorized representative of the deceased's estate; this provision ensures that the deceased user's phone line remains intact, either under the administration of the executor or through



other designated arrangements."

Highlighting the importance of preserving the original user's information, Kibaja added: "It is crucial to recognize that the transferred mobile phone line retains the information associated with the original owner. This includes financial records, biometrically registered personal data, and potentially even evidence of criminal activities if the deceased user was involved in such acts.

Therefore, the focus of the transfer lies solely on the usage of the phone line, while the ownership and privacy of the original

user's information are diligently preserved."

Emphasizing the significance of mobile phone numbers as valuable resources, TCRA urges users to actively use their phone lines.

Kibaja noted: "Failure to use the phone line for a period of ninety days may result in the network provider reassigning the number to another individual."

He advised users to inform their network provider in writing if they plan to travel abroad or be away for an extended period exceeding ninety days, stating:

"This ensures that their phone line remains reserved until their return."

The regulations also address the process of changing a user's name.

Kibaja explained: "If a customer's name is registered with the National Identification Authority, any name changes must be promptly reported to ensure accurate record-keeping. Mobile phone lines associated with changed names will require re-registration, incorporating biometric verification through fingerprint recognition."

Stressing the user's responsibility, Kibaja emphasized: "It is the responsibility of each mobile phone user to comply with this requirement by registering their lines with their respective service providers or authorized agents. Additionally, users should keep their PINs confidential and inform their service provider of any changes in user details or the usage of their registered phone lines."

With these regulations, TCRA aims to protect the digital legacies of deceased mobile phone users. Kibaja expressed: "By ad-

hering to the proper procedures, family members and authorized representatives can ensure the preservation of valuable data and resources associated with the deceased's phone line."

He also encouraged users to play an active role in safeguarding their digital identities, stating: "Informing their service providers of any changes or transfers will help maintain the integrity and privacy of their personal information."

Sarah Johnson, the authorized representative

of her late father's estate, shared her experience in dealing with the regulations set by TCRA.

She said: "Navigating the process of preserving my father's digital legacy was made easier by TCRA's clear guidelines. Presenting the necessary documents as the executor ensured that his phone line remained under our control, allowing us to manage his affairs efficiently. It was comforting to know that his personal information was protected, and we could access important data and contacts associated with his phone number. I am grateful for TCRA's commitment to preserving the digital legacies of deceased individuals and their understanding of the sensitive nature of this process."

The regulations outlined by TCRA provide a framework to honor the digital legacies of deceased mobile phone users.

Kibaja stated: "By understanding and following these guidelines, users and their families can ensure that their valuable information remains secure and accessible within the parameters of the law."

TCRA's commitment to protecting the rights and privacy of individuals extends even beyond their lifetime, offering a comprehensive framework for the management of mobile phone accounts after the users passing.

Women's savings in Zimbabwe struggle under weight of unstable currency

BY IGNATIUS BANDA

FOR years, self-employed and un-employed women in Zimbabwe formed neighbourhood "clubs" where they pooled money together for everything from buying bulk groceries to be shared at the end of the year to meeting funeral expenses.

But as inflation renders the local currency virtually worthless, with, for example, the price of a loaf of bread reaching ZWD4,000, women rights advocates say this has thrown local saving initiatives into a mind-numbing tailspin.

In recent weeks, the local dollar has been on a frenzied free fall against the greenback, and in one week alone, the parallel market rate went from USD1:ZWD2,000 to anything between USD1:ZWD3,000 and ZWD4,000. Zimbabwe National Statistics Agency put Zimbabwe's annual inflation rates at triple digits, with inflation rising 175.8% in June from 86.5% the previous month.

"We cannot buy foreign currency on the street to keep our savings club operating. You can't plan anything with such an ever-changing exchange rate," said Juliet Mbewe, a Bulawayo homemaker who sells snacks, sweets and other small items on a roadside not far from her township home.

"It was better when the country was using the USD as the official currency," she said, referring to the period of the country's government of national unity between 2009 and 2013.

That period is widely credited with taming Zimbabwe's economic turmoil and also helped make savings possible for women such as Mbewe.

Women's savings clubs contributed monthly instalments of anything from as little as USD5, and from this pool, the club operated as an informal bank or microfinance lender where they issued loans at a small interest.

The accumulated savings were shared at the end of the year, while other such clubs bought groceries in bulk to be shared in time for Christmas.

And this was also a time when local banks encouraged women's clubs to partner with registered financial institutions to incubate their savings and earn interest at the end of the year.

But with banks not being spared the decades-old economic turmoil, which has seen even banks close shop, financial institutions that remain are not known to offer ordinary account holders interest on their savings.

However, the return of rampant inflation is making the operation of women's savings clubs increasingly difficult, says Mavis Dube, who formerly led a group of women's clubs as their treasurer.

"It's no longer easy because of the unstable currency. It now means having to raise more local dollars in order to buy foreign currency," Dube said; as the authorities struggle to put breaks on a currency on free fall, these have been upended by inflation and an steady local currency.

For those who can afford that, the women are cushioning themselves from this by buying livestock which they say is guaranteed to store value.

International NGOs such as World Vision are assisting rural women navigate increasingly tough economic circumstances, supporting projects such as raising and selling poultry.

However, such projects have not been made available to more women in a country where self-help efforts face incredible odds as



Zimbabwean women's informal savings clubs have been hit by high inflation and the low value of the country's currency. Credit: Ignatius Banda/IPS

inflation gnaws into small enterprises. While the Ministry of Women Affairs, Community, Small and Medium Enterprises Development has made efforts to encourage women's participation in the country's economic development agenda, it has struggled to keep up with the increasing number of women seeking assistance to start

their own businesses. The ministry recently launched what it says are "Women Empowerment Clubs" with the aim to assist women access funding, but concerns remain that the red tape involved in accessing the loans only enables a cycle of poverty for women. Rights advocates say the high un-

employment rate among women has meant that women have no access to the formal banking sector, where they access loans. "Most banks and lending institutions require collateral for them to release loans which most women do not have. Profits from the informal sector are so meagre and only allow women

to feed from hand to mouth," said Sithabile Dewa, executive director of the Women's Academy for Leadership and Excellence.

"In order to address these challenges, the government must put in place laws and policies that protect women in small businesses, such as discouraging lending institutions from putting too much interest or demanding collateral on women, something they know they do not have," Dewa told IPS.

While women have attempted to keep up with the volatile exchange rate, it has exposed their vulnerability to poverty at a time when agencies such as UN Women lament that women's economic empowerment in Zimbabwe has been "impeded by their dominance in the informal sector and vulnerable employment."

While saving clubs served as a bulwark against such uncertainties, Dewa says contemporary economic circumstances have made it near impossible to run such schemes that hedged against poverty.

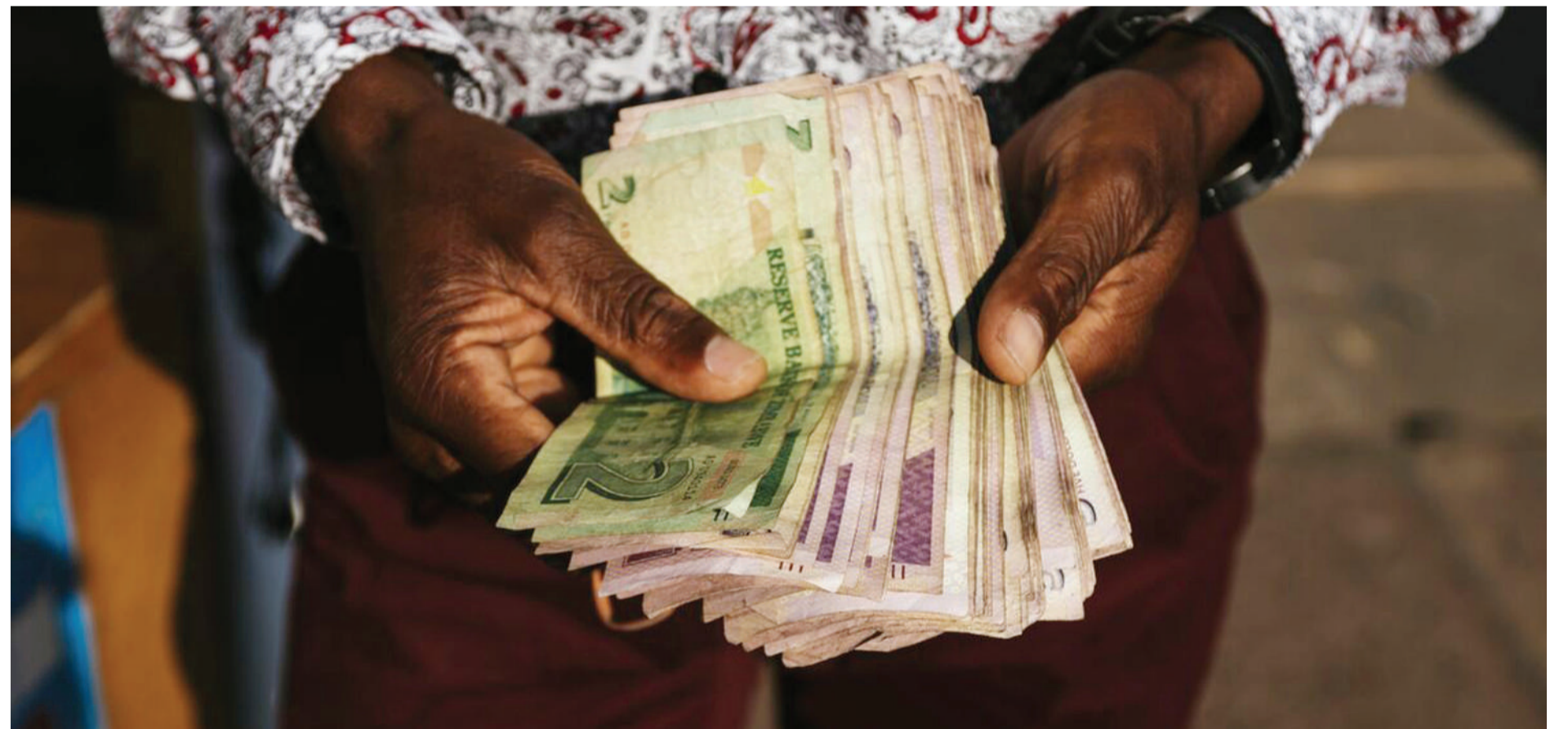
"The savings clubs are still there though they have been modernised to meet the changing times," Dewa said.

"The problems facing these clubs are hyper-inflation, an unstable and unpredictable economy. Those which are still viable are the ones being done using USD, but how many women have access to the foreign currency," she added.

For now, women such as Mbewe and Dune continue to live hand to mouth, their ambitions to save for a rainy day effectively on pause.

"It's harder now than ever, and the pain is that there is no sign this will end anytime soon," Mbewe said, the little she makes selling sweets barely enough to meet her daily needs.

IPS UN Bureau Report



Zimbabwe National Statistics Agency put the country's annual inflation rates at triple digits, with inflation rising 175.8% in June from 86.5% the previous month.

RADIO One **RATIBA YA VIPINDI** **JUMATATU - JUMAPILI**

MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
TIME PROGRAMME	TIME PROGRAMME	TIME PROGRAMME	TIME PROGRAMME	TIME PROGRAMME	TIME PROGRAMME	TIME PROGRAMME
05:00 AM HALI YA HEWA / KUMEPAMBAZUKA I 06:00 AM AMKA NA BBC 06:30 AM NIPASHE 06:50 AM MATANGAZO 07:00 AM NEWS BULLETIN 07:10 AM MATANGAZO 07:15 AM TAARIFA ZA BARABARANI 07:25 AM UDONDOZI WA MAGAZETI 07:40 AM KUMEPAMBAZUKA II 08:00 AM HABARI NYEPESI 08:10 AM HABARI ZA BIASHARA 08:20 AM BRAND TALK 09:00 AM HABARI NYEPESI 10:00 AM NEWS BRIEF 10:03 AM DEATH ANNOUNCEMENTS 10:10 AM YALUYOMO YAMO 13:00 HRS NEWS BULLETIN 13:10 HRS DEATH ANNOUNCEMENTS 13:30 HRS DJ SHOW 16:00 HRS NEWS BRIEF 16:03 HRS DEATH ANNOUNCEMENTS 16:30 HRS HOJA YA LEO 18:30 HRS DIRA YA DUNIA BBC 19:30 HRS SPOTI LEO 20:00 HRS NEWS BULLETIN 20:10 HRS RADIO ONE DOCTOR 21:00 HRS NEWS BRIEF 21:05 HRS DAKIKA 45 22:15 HRS SPOTI LEO (24 HRS) 22:15 HRS AFRO TIZI 23:00 HRS NEWS BRIEF 23:03 HRS AFRO TIZI 01:00-05:00 HRS MUZIKI (MCHANGANYIKO)	05:00 AM HALI YA HEWA / KUMEPAMBAZUKA I 06:00 AM AMKA NA BBC 06:30 AM NIPASHE 06:50 AM MATANGAZO 07:00 AM NEWS BULLETIN 07:10 AM MATANGAZO 07:15 AM TAARIFA ZA BARABARANI 07:25 AM UDONDOZI WA 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Agent banking net cash deposits value hits 9trn/-

By Guardian Reporter

Banks' agents net cash deposits has continued to increase, helping commercial bank to mobilize funding and recruit new customers, after hitting the record level of 9trn/- during the year ended in March this year, compared with 7trn/- recorded during the year ended in March 2022.

Data by Bank of Tanzania (BoT) show during the end of the first quarter of this year, agent banking cash deposits mobilization increased by 13.5 percent to 13.3trn/- higher than 11.7trn/- recorded at the end of March 2022.

Cash withdrawal through agent banking also increased by 25.8 percent to 4.2trn/- in March this year, from 3.3trn/- recorded at the end of March 2022.

Number of agents also increased by 51 percent annually to 80,295 at the end of March this year, compared with 53,006 recorded during the end of March last year.

BoT has said the increased number of bank agents was partly

caused by moderation of agent banking eligibility criteria and enhanced public awareness among commercial banks on the use of agents.

In 2013, commercial banks were allowed to contract third party retail networks as agents after successful application, vetting and approval, to offer selected products and services on behalf of the banks.

The Bank of Tanzania (BoT) required applicants of the agent banking business to have an experience of at least 18 months for one to be eligible, but in March 2021, the central bank removed the criterion and, alternatively, required to only have a National ID Card or National ID number.

The consolidated zonal economic report for the first quarter of this year ended in March shows Dar es Salaam was leading with agent banking's net cash deposits amounting 2.6trn/- after transacting deposits amounting 3.76trn/- against withdrawal of 1.15trn/-.

Number of bank agents in Dar es Salaam also increased 26,880



during the first quarter of this year, from 18,012 recorded at the end of March last year.

Provisional data show that banks deposits in Dar es Salaam zone

amounted to 17.1trn/- at the end of March, an increase of 11 percent, compared with 15.3trn/- recorded at the end of March 2022, while borrowing amounted to 14.1trn/-

from 11.7trn/- respectively.

The second highest net deposits amounted to 3.08trn/- against withdrawal of 809bn/-. Number of bank agents in the zone also increased to 14,232 at the end of March 2023, from 9,199 at the end of March 2022.

Total banks deposits from Lake Zone during the reviewed period also increased to 2.3trn/- from 2.1trn/- respectively, while the stock of credits increased to 3.2trn/- at the end of March, 2023, compared with 2.53trn/- recorded at the end of March 2022.

Northern zone recorded the third highest value of agent banking net cash deposits amounting to nearly 1.4trn/- after recorded the value of deposits amounting to 1.94trn/- against withdrawal of 551bn/-.

Provisional and revised data shows northern zone of Tanzania recorded the bank deposits amounting to 3.4trn/- at the end of March 2023, compared to 2.9trn/- at the end of March 2022, while

the stock of bank loans jumped to 2.4trn/- from 2.2trn/- respectively.

Southern highlands zone net cash deposit through agent banking according to the report amounted to 1.1trn/- after registering a deposits amounting 1.9trn/- against withdrawal of 711bn/-.

According to provisional data, banks deposits in southern highlands at the end of March last year amounted to 1.09trn/-, a slight increase from 1.03trn/-, while the stock of bank loans amounted to 823bn/- from 801bn/- respectively.

Central zone of Tanzania, which comprise of the national capital of Dodoma, where banks are now expanding their footprints recorded the net deposits of 1.1trn/- through agents banking, after recording a deposit of 1.6trn/- against withdrawal of 591bn/-.

The lowest net cash deposits was recorded in south eastern zone of Tanzania mainland with 510bn/- after depositing 911bn/- through agency banking, against withdrawal of 401bn/- at the end of March this year.

Infobip to help Tanzanian businesses achieve growth

By Guardian Reporter

Global cloud communications company Infobip has announced deepening collaboration with Tanzanian businesses to help them meet their customers on their preferred channels and boost return on investment and revenues.

Infobip says it is leveraging its omnichannel capabilities to aid companies deploy tools and technologies to help them understand their customers more deeply through use of data and analytics designed to predict their behavior.

"Customers increasingly want to communicate with businesses and brands on the channels they use every day and up to 75 percent of them would easily shift to a different product or service purely based on their customer experience. Businesses must therefore meet them at their points of preference to exhaustively mitigate attrition," said Infobip Industry Lead for Retail E-commerce and Telcos in Africa James Gachie.

Gachie noted social media has made it easy for people to give real-time feedback on service whether good or bad, and especially bad service.



Infobip's Banking and Financial Services Key Account Executive Loren Lubanga (L), Telco Account Manager Jeff Oduor (C) and Infobip Industry Lead for Retail E-commerce and Telcos in Africa James Gachie (R) read a document soon after announcing a deepening collaboration with Kenyan businesses to help meeting their customers on their preferred channels and boost return on investment and revenues. Photo by Guardian Correspondent

"The digital revolution has given the customer the power to determine how they want to be treated, and companies no longer have the advantage of setting the terms of engagement, which now

falls squarely on the customer," he added.

According to Infobip which processes over 37 billion interactions monthly worldwide, key sectors in Tanzania that are currently leading the customer experience race include Telecoms, Banking and Finance, e-commerce, Travel and Hospitality, Insurance, Transport and Logistics as well as Retail.

"We have been able to deploy several breakthrough innovations in these sectors that are democratizing interactions between businesses in these sectors and their customers. This includes the deployment of an AI-based WhatsApp chatbot solution powered by Infobip in key businesses that is helping on-board unique users and generate new leads through the popular channel," said Gachie.

Infobip has recently launched a new blue print to enable brands embed conversational experiences for customer communication for both retention and growth. The blueprint details how businesses can design end-to-end customer journeys through chat apps to boost customer loyalty and sales.

Ghana agrees restructuring deal with banks on its domestic debt

ACCRA

Ghana has reached an agreement with banks to restructure 15 billion Ghana cedi (\$1.36 billion) of locally issued US dollar bonds and cocoa bills, three sources close to the negotiations have told Reuters.

The West African nation is seeking new terms for the restructuring of its domestic debt by the end of June to be able to meet an International Monetary Fund (IMF) deadline, and focus attention on negotiations with external creditors.

Ghana concluded the first phase of its domestic debt exchange in February, with 85percent of eligible bondholders participating, but needs new terms for another 123 billion Ghana cedi (\$11.18 billion) to qualify for the next tranche of a \$3 billion IMF loan to address its worst economic crisis in a generation.

The debt comprises domestic dollar bonds, cocoa bills, pension funds and debt owed the central bank. Cocoa bills are securities issued to meet the short-term liquidity needs of the country's cocoa regulator Cocobod.

The sources, two in the finance ministry and one at a bank that holds some of the bonds, said the government and the lenders have agreed to convert 6.9 billion Ghana cedi worth of domestic US dollar bonds into two term loans with new lower rates.

Another 8.1 billion Ghana Cedi worth of cocoa bills will be converted into a new bond at 12 percent yield, although some banks are holding out for 13 percent, a banking source said. The last cocoa bill issued in February 2023 had a yield of 32.22 percent.

The finance ministry declined to comment while Cocobod and a lobby group representing the banks did not respond to requests for comment.

The new loans have a five-year maturity, starting from 2025, the three sources, who are part of the negotiations, said, requesting anonymity because they are not authorised to speak publicly.

The gold-, cocoa- and oil-exporting country, which defaulted on most external debt in December, aims to reduce its external debt interest repayments by \$10.5 billion over the next three years under an IMF bailout secured in May.

A memorandum of understanding for the domestic US dollar bonds is with the securities and exchange commission at the moment for approval. "Our target is to conclude it by the end of June," one of the finance ministry source said.

"They (the banks) understand that they are better off getting a restructuring because we may not be able to pay the coupon," the other finance ministry source said.

Uganda MPs inch closer on start to Islamic banking

KAMPALA

Parliament has passed a series of Bills to harmonise issues relating to Islamic Banking products, only setting aside the Income Tax Amendment Bill for committee and government concurrence.

In its sitting on Tuesday June 27, 2023 chaired by Speaker Anita Among, the Bills were passed to clear the way for the long awaited Islamic banking.

The Financial Institutions Act has been amended in section 115B(2) to remove the provision for a Shariah Advisory Council, which MPs said would be over-legislation, instead opting for Bank of Uganda to institutionally address operational issues relating to Islamic banking.

The Attorney General, Hon. Kiryowa Kiwanuka, said maintaining in the Financial Institutions Act a provision for the committee would complicate the central bank's supervisory mandate over a product it has helped to create.

"First of all, Bank of Uganda should never determine the business model of



any commercial bank, it should sit outside to determine whether the product is safe for the customer; if it sits in the advisory council, who will protect the consumers?" he said.

MP Abdu Katuntu (IND, Bugweri) agreed with the Attorney General.

"You have to leave the Bank of Uganda structures to work; there is only one law which is seeking to prescribe the operational work of Bank of Uganda; what you

need to have is a department...they can create some departments in charge of Islamic Banking, and this can come under Regulations and not substantive law," counseled Katuntu.

He added: "Bank of Uganda cannot create and regulate a product at the same time."

Then came the Excise Duty Amendment Bill 2023, which MPs passed to change Schedule 2 of the Excise Duty

Act and place a 15 per cent excise duty on ledger, ATM, and withdrawal fees, to bring Islamic banking products under the same tax regime as other banking products.

This now harmonises excise duty on all banking products uniformly.

MPs unanimously okayed the amendment to the second schedule of the Stamp Duty Act to reflect an Shs15,000 charge on Islamic banking-related agreements.

The Value Added Tax Amendment Bill, which harmonises the reporting time for conventional banking practices and the Islamic banking was also passed by Members, bringing the country closer to the commencement of Islamic banking financial products by commercial banks.

Speaker Among described the laws as an Eid-al-Adhuha gift for the Muslim community that has been longing for the introduction of Shariah-compliant banking products, vowing to resist people she said have been eager to frustrate the idea.

CROWDFUNDING: THREAT OR OPPORTUNITY FOR BANKS? - PART II

By Kelvin Mkwawa

Last week I shared that crowdfunding can be defined as an effort by various parties to pool their resources together to support/invest in a project/business initiated by an individual or an organization. Also, I shared that crowdfunding has become one of the most popular ways for individuals to raise money for a cause, project, or event. The global crowdfunding market size was valued at \$1.67 billion in 2022 and is expected to expand at a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of 16.7% from 2023 to 2030 per a Market analysis report by Grandview Research firm based in California, USA. The market growth is credited to rising crowdfunding activities on social media platforms and a high level of awareness among societies. Transaction value in the Crowdfunding segment is projected to reach \$1.10bn in 2023 according to Statista. In addition, I shared why crowdfunding platforms can be considered as threats to banks in rendering financial services; crowdfunding combines both financing and marketing in one package from the customer's perspective in which funders are the biggest cheerleaders and tend to know the features of a product being



Kelvin Mkwawa

offered. This makes it easier for consumers to get familiar with crowdfunding products hence making the transition from traditional banking products easier.

Moreover, I shared that crowdfunding products empower consumers by allowing the funds to be provided by a group of individuals instead of investors. This makes the consumers feel engaged and part of the products, hence taking ownership and sharing with their

friends and families. Crowdfunding means that companies are connected to their consumer base more closely than banks. Also, I opined that even though crowdfunding appears to be filling the gap for micro and small businesses which are deemed too risky to obtain financing through traditional banking methods, I believe that it does not pose any real threats to banks. Because banks have established a solid foundation and history which is known by most consumers and crowdfunding has not. Moreover, the unregulated nature of the crowdfunding sector is also a cause for concern for many consumers thus they prefer dealing with traditional banking systems. However, it can't be denied crowdfunding is bringing in some much-needed changes, especially in developed markets. Therefore, it is an area that banks can't afford to overlook. This week, I will discuss crowdfunding as an opportunity for banks.

There is an opportunity for banks to collaborate with crowdfunding platforms. What makes this an opportunity for banks? Because banks already have the customers, the infrastructures, a business model, and capabilities so, implementing the crowdfunding platforms model

will not be a major problem. Banks have different options to onboard crowdfunding platforms; acquire an existing crowdfunding platform, set up a new one, or create a joint venture with an existing crowdfunding platform. The main issue might be a brand perception of crowdfunding as it has been considered anti-establishment in response to the strictness of banks in lending to small businesses. With banks already operating in different markets and having experience in deploying systems and processes, this is a chance for banks to collaborate with crowdfunding on different levels. This will allow banks to present a new product (crowdfunding) to its already vast number of consumers. More importantly, this collaboration will give banks the golden opportunity to tap into an already established customer base of people who are looking for business finance and also looking to invest in businesses. In my personal opinion, I believe banks should get involved with crowdfunding as there are more opportunities to work with crowdfunding than to compete with them. By taking the opportunity to jump into crowdfunding, it won't make banks incredibly wealthy, but it provides them with an additional, and

relatively, risk-free revenue stream while being relevant to consumers.

In conclusion, even though crowdfunding is not currently viewed as a realistic alternative to banks, I believe they are playing a huge part in financing many start-ups and existing businesses that would have problems securing financing from banks. In the last two weeks, I shared that crowdfunding platforms can be considered threats to banks in rendering financial services.

Since crowdfunding offers both financing and marketing in one package in which funders are the biggest cheerleaders of the products offered, it is easier for consumers to get familiar with its products compared to a bank's products. Furthermore, I stated that there is an opportunity for banks to collaborate with crowdfunding platforms. Because banks already have the customers, the infrastructure, a business model, and capabilities, implementing the crowdfunding platforms model will not be a major problem for them.

Kelvin Mkwawa, (pictured) is the seasoned banker based in Dar es Salaam. He can be reached through email address: Kelvin.e.mkwawa@gmail.com

AfDB supports Kenyan women, youths in agribusiness

ABIDJAN

The board of directors of the African Development Bank (AfDB) Group has approved an equity investment of €18 million in the Africa Guarantee Fund (AGF) and another €1.2 million to support youth and women entrepreneurs engaged in agricultural value chains in Kenya.

The funding, approved on June 6, 2023, was provided by the European Union (EU) under its partnership with the African Development Bank Group.

Nnenna Nwabuo, the Bank Group's Director General for East Africa, noted the approval as "another milestone in the implementation of the partnership with the EU, which also signals the importance given to

the role of women and youth in the agricultural sector in Kenya."

The demand for Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSME) financing remains unmet in Kenya and has been aggravated by the disruptions of the Covid-19 pandemic. The International Finance Corporation (IFC) estimates an SME finance gap of US\$19.38 billion, representing 30 per cent of the country's GDP.

The World Bank's Covid-19 Business Pulse Survey (BPS) shows that many potentially viable firms are still struggling. The agriculture sector employs the largest share of the population, especially in rural areas, and accounts for 60 per cent of Kenya's export.

Access to capital for women entre-

preneurs and youth opens up their potential for participation in the Agricultural value chains.

The Africa Guarantee Fund (AGF) seeks to boost SMEs' access to finance and capacity development, thereby increasing employment and reducing poverty.

According to data by the Kenya Youth Agribusiness Strategy 2017-2022, 64 per cent of the unemployed Kenyans are youth (18 to 35 years old), with the majority moving away from agriculture to fast-growing non-agricultural sectors in urban areas.

Women face many constraints hampering their access to finance and the growth of their businesses. These include a lack of business management skills, legal, social, and poli-

cy barriers, poor access to networks and information, and inadequate financing options catering for their specific needs.

Banks often perceive women-led businesses as risky due to the low quality or number of assets for collateral and the generally smaller business sizes. Therefore, supporting women entrepreneurs and catalyzing private investment in this segment are crucial measures to foster inclusive economic growth in Kenya.

According to the 2017 Economic Survey by the Kenya National Bureau of Statistics, commercial bank lending to the sector in 2016 stood at a mere three per cent, as the risk level of this customer segment is deemed high.

Chinese delegation seeks opportunities cooperation with Tanzania nationals

By Correspondent Joseph Mwendapole

Hangzhou delegation from China are in the country seeking opportunities for cooperation and investment with Tanzanian counterparts in a time when 100 Chinese companies are expected to participate in this year's 47th Dar es Salaam International Trade Fair.

The Chinese delegation also held a business communication conference yesterday with Tanzanian authorities, enterprises and business community.

Speaking during the conference, the East Africa Commercial & Logistics Center (EACLC) Director General Cathy Wang said; "As an old Chinese saying goes, "Nothing can separate people with shared aspirations and common goals, not even mountains and seas."

She said there will be a face-to-face communication between the Hangzhou delegation, the Tanzanian government and enterprises to establish sincere friendship, spark cooperation and exchanging business opportunities.

She added that face to face meeting among the business community from the two countries will build an effective channel for the win-win cooperation between China and Tanzania.

She said they choose the meeting venue to be held in East Africa Commercial & Logistics Center Sales Center in Ubungu, to give an opportunity for the center to present their project to the delegation.

"This is going to be done in order to promote the economic and trade cooperation between Chinese enterprises and Tanzania and practice the "Belt and Road" Initiative through EACLC Limited and our holding companies," she said

She said Shanghai Linghang Group and Weihai Huatan supply chain management Co. Ltd have been in Tanzania for over ten years and actively bridging China-Africa economic and trade cooperation.

"Standing at the new starting point, we will continue learn and implement the principles of "sincerity, real results, amity and good faith" in terms of the cooperation with Africa, which is put forward by President Xi Jinping. We're committed to facilitate Chinese Enterprises to enter Africa to explore the Tanzania market," she said

She said Chinese business will play an active role in enhancing the economic and trade exchanges and cooperation to contribute to the industrialization of the Tanzanian economy.

"I look forward to work with all leaders and Chinese enterprises to provide intellectual support and experience for the high-quality cooperation and development between China and Tanzania," she said.

She said in on July 3 they expect to have more than 50 Shandong companies from China and Tanzanian business community will have chance to talk with them to get more information of Shandong.

"On 4th July, we will have CHINA DAY and opening ceremony of Shandong exhibition session business community are welcomed, Chinese traditional performances and cultural showcases will be there, you will experience more than trading itself," she said.

UAE banks record credit growth amid interest rate hike

ABU DHABI

Credit growth in the United Arab Emirates (UAE) banking sector, a key indicator of overall economic growth, surged to almost Dh2.0 trillion in the first quarter despite rising interest rates, signifying the resilient trend in the business sector.

Gross credit showed a 0.9 per cent quarter-on-quarter (q-o-q) increase, amounting to Dh1.895.8 trillion, while customer deposits rose by 3.8 per cent q-o-q and 14.9 per cent y-o-y, reaching Dh 2,306.0 billion. Total assets of banks operating in the country increased by 2.6 per cent q-o-q, reaching Dh3.7647 trillion by the end of the first quarter of 2023, the Central Bank of the UAE (CBUAE) said in a report.

When credit grows, consumers can borrow and spend more, and enterprises can borrow and invest more.

A rise of consumption and investments creates jobs and leads to a growth of both income and profit. Corporate credit shocks influence GDP growth mainly through investment, while consumer credit shocks are associated with private consumption.

Interest rate in the UAE averaged 1.49 per cent from 2007 until 2023, reaching an all time high of 5.15 per cent in May 2023 and a record low of 0.15 per cent in July 2021.



The CBUAE report provides insights into the banking sector, including the number of banks operating in the UAE. At the end of the first quarter of 2023, there were 22 locally incorporated banks, while the branches of these banks decreased to 494. The number of electronic banking service units increased to 47, and the cash offices remained constant at 21.

The capital adequacy ratios of banks operating in the UAE, indicating the amount of capital in relation to risk-weighted exposures, increased by 0.5 per cent q-o-q, reaching Dh430.7 billion by the end of the first quarter as the total Capital

Adequacy Ratio stood at 17.8 per cent, well above the prescribed requirements.

In the first quarter, the Central Bank's foreign assets increased by 8.8 per cent q-o-q, reaching Dh537.4 billion. The report also highlights the performance of financial markets, with the Abu Dhabi Financial Market Index falling by 6.7 per cent q-o-q and the Dubai Financial Market Index increasing by 1.6 per cent q-o-q during the same period.

Resident deposits increased by 4.1 per cent q-o-q, settling at Dh2.093 trillion, while non-resident deposits rose by 0.4 per cent q-o-q, amounting to Dh213.4 billion.

Gross assets of Sharia-compliant banks operating in the UAE also recorded strong growth to hit Dh650 billion by the end of Q1-2023, an annual increase of 7.31 per cent, equivalent to nearly Dh44.3 billion, from 605.7 billion in March 2022.

The apex bank's statistics reflect an increase in Islamic banks' credit to Dh400.2 billion at the end of March 2023, an annual growth of 2.51 per cent compared to nearly Dh390.4 billion in March 2022, and a month-over-month increase of 0.91 per cent, from Dh396.6 billion in February.

Islamic banks' deposits increased to Dh453.4 billion

in March 2023, an annual increase of 6.2 per cent, from nearly Dh427 billion in March 2022. The total investments of Islamic banks amounted to Dh111.5 billion by the end of March 2022.

In the meantime, the UAE-based conventional banks had total assets of Dh3.115 trillion, up 14.1 per cent from Dh2.73 trillion in March 2022.

These banks accounted for around 82.7 per cent of the total assets of the UAE's banking sector by end of March 2023, or Dh3.765 trillion, while Islamic lenders held 17.3 per cent poverty with digital transformation of our economy."

European bank offers Bank of Africa finances to support Moroccan small, medium businesses

RABAT

The European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) announced mid this week issuing a €50 million credit line for Bank of Africa - BMCE Group (BOA) to facilitate lending to micro, small, and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs) in Morocco. This initiative aims to enhance the resilience and competitiveness of Morocco's private sector.

The loan is part of the EBRD Financial Intermediaries Framework (FIF) and will assist BOA in addressing the financing gap faced by MSMEs, which often struggle to access adequate funding in Morocco's banking sector.

With the new credit line, BOA will be able to provide much-needed financial support to these underserved businesses, an EBRD statement explains.

The statement details that part of the loan will be specifically allocated to financing companies operating in value chains located in Tangier and Kenitra, as well as in underserved regions.

The allocation is intended to streamline access to financing for small businesses, promoting economic growth and development in these areas.

The agreement to provide the credit line was signed by Mark Bowman, the EBRD Vice President for Policy and Partnerships, Brahim Benjelloun-Touimi, Director and General Manager of Bank of Africa,



and Khalid Nasr, BOA's Executive General Manager responsible for CIB and Morocco.

In the statement, Bowman expressed his satisfaction with the facility, stating that it "will support one of the EBRD's key partners in Morocco in this challenging global economic environment, which is aggravated by the war in Ukraine, and help mitigate its impact on MSME lending."

Bowman also expressed hope that the recently approved increase in the Trade Facilitation Programme (TFP) limit would contribute to filling trade finance gaps and

foster economic resilience in the country.

For his part, Benjelloun-Touimi emphasized the significance of the partnership between BOA and the EBRD.

He described the signing as a milestone in their long-standing relationship and highlighted BOA's commitment to inclusive finance, particularly for small and medium-sized enterprises.

"We remain resolute in our quest for a positive impact on our customers, our stakeholders, and more generally on the environment of our activities," Benjelloun-Touimi added.

In addition to the credit line, the EBRD has increased the total trade line limit granted to Bank of Africa under its Trade Facilitation Programme from \$150 million to \$175 million.

The increase will enable BOA to issue guarantees to confirming banks and provide cash financing for pre-export, post-import financing, and local distribution.

It will also facilitate the importation of a wide range of goods into Morocco, benefiting BOA and its private MSME and corporate clients. The expanded limit also

presents an opportunity for BOA to further support Morocco's green economy, aligning with the EBRD's Green Trade Facilitation Programme. BOA will engage in sourcing transactions for scrap metal and forestry from sustainable sources, thereby contributing to environmentally responsible practices.

BOA will also receive comprehensive technical assistance from the European bank including advisory services, access to the EBRD Trade Finance e-Learning Programme, and interactive workshops covering various trade finance topics.

Banks now shut ATMs on digital, agency banking uptake increase

NAIROBI

Banks have cut the number of automated teller machines (ATMs) to levels last seen 11 years ago as customers increasingly turn to agency, internet and mobile banking.

Central Bank of Kenya (CBK) data shows the banking sector closed May with 2,291 ATMs, compared with 2,338 in a similar period last year to send the total count near the 2,285 that were in the market in November 2012.

The continued drop in the number of ATMs, which were once the epitome of convenience, reflects the impact of the growing popularity of agents, internet and mobile banking among customers as they search for even more convenience.

The CBK statistics showed the value of mobile money transactions in a month hit a record at Sh722.5 billion in July last year, fuelled by increased demand for cashless transactions and the establishment of 42,700 new active mobile money agents.

The latest data up to May shows there were 77.34 million registered mobile money accounts—a record high—with the total value of transactions at Sh670.44 billion helped by 334,726 agents.

This is in contrast with 2012 when Kenya had about 20 million active mobile money accounts, handling Sh140 billion per month, according to the CBK data.

Lenders such as KCB, Equity and Cooperative Bank of Kenya have witnessed a similar trend, with the number and value of branch and ATM transactions declining as those outside these two platforms rise.

Equity disclosures, for instance, showed there were 234.7 million digital transactions valued at Sh2.288 trillion in the first quarter of the year compared with 9.2 million transactions via branch and ATM valued at Sh1.055 trillion.

The banking sector had 2,652 ATMs at the end of 2015, meaning that more than 360 units have been shut down in under seven years.

The continued drop points to the waning popularity of the once-revolutionary technology that was introduced in Kenya during the 1990s to decongest the banking halls.

ATMs offered customers the first escape route from long banking queues, forcing banks to install more machines.

Banks have slowed their focus on ATMs but opted to enrich this technology with new capabilities such as the ability to deposit money as opposed to just the traditional use of cash withdrawal.



Banks have cut the number of automated teller machines (ATMs) to levels last seen 11 years ago. FILE PHOTO | SHUTTERSTOCK

China likely to ramp up monetary, fiscal stimulus, Bloomberg shows

BEIJING

China is expected to cut interest rates again this year and ramp up fiscal stimulus to spur a faltering economy, according to economists surveyed by Bloomberg.

The People's Bank of China (PBOC) will likely reduce the rate on its one-year policy loans – known as the medium-term lending facility – by 5 basis points to 2.6 percent in the final quarter of this year, according to the median estimate in the latest quarterly survey. It's also expected to reduce the reserve requirement ratio for banks in the coming months, the forecasts show.

On the fiscal side, economists predict the government will roll out tax breaks for consumers and increase financing for infrastructure investment, partly through state policy banks, like China Development Bank.

Beijing is under mounting pressure to boost the economy after a marked slowdown in the second quarter led by a weakening property market, subdued consumer spending and a slump in export demand. The central bank's surprise interest-rate cut in June fueled speculation of more stimulus, although the State Council, China's cabinet, has been slow to announce any new measures.

Brian Lee, an economist at Maybank Securities Ltd., said the PBOC may wait until late in the third quarter or the final three months of the year before reducing rates further, given Beijing's relatively conservative growth target of around 5 percent and worries over the currency.



"Cutting interest rates too quickly while the Federal Reserve and other global central banks hike could risk further capital outflows," he said.

The yuan has already lost more than 4 percent against the dollar this year, with officials showing more concern recently about its slide.

The PBOC on Tuesday set the daily reference rate for the yuan far stronger than analysts had estimated following a plunge in the currency the day before. Wednesday's fixing matched estimates as the central bank stood back from supporting the yuan, signaling it may not yet be ready to draw a line in the sand.

Investors have turned more pessimistic about China's growth outlook after a slew of recent data showed the economy is weakening. Consumer spending, in particular, is showing a downturn, with domestic travel expenditure over last week's holiday to celebrate the dragon-boat festival coming in lower than pre-pandemic levels.

Economists surveyed by Bloomberg downgraded their forecasts for gross domestic product growth for the second quarter, although kept their projections for the full year unchanged at 5.5 percent.

"Although strong first-

quarter GDP and activity data confirmed the reopening rebound in services and consumption, the activity data for April and May were on balance underwhelming, and show that headwinds from the global growth slowdown and property remain serious," said Arjen van Dijkhuizen, a senior economist at ABN Amro.

He predicted "piecemeal monetary easing and more targeted support directed at weak spots, including real estate."

Of 20 economists surveyed by Bloomberg, 18 said the government will announce more fiscal support measures this year. Twelve of them expect tax cuts or

rebates for small businesses, technology firms and for green projects, while 10 predict state policy banks will increase loans or equity investment in infrastructure projects. Nine forecast an increase in the quota for local government special bonds.

"Given the financial challenges at the local government and corporate level, the central government may accelerate special local government bond issuance and resume policy banks' special infrastructure investment fund, with more policy bank lending, to help boost infrastructure investment," Tao Wang, UBS Group AG's chief China economist, wrote in a note.

Survey findings show GDP will expand 0.8 percent quarter-on-quarter in the second quarter, down from 1.1 percent in the previous survey.

On a year-on-year basis, GDP to grow 7.5 percent compared with previous survey estimate of 7.7 percent. Full-year GDP forecasts for this year and next left unchanged at 5.5 percent and 4.9 percent, respectively.

PBOC expected to cut the one-year medium-term lending facilities rate by 5 basis points to 2.6 percent in the last quarter of this year.

BANKING&FINANCE

EU proposes more competition in payments sector

LONDON

The European Union on Wednesday proposed injecting more competition into the payments sector, giving legal backing to a digital euro, and preserving the role of cash as fewer people use coins and notes.

The package of European Commission reforms, which update decade-old rules, seek

to prise open a payments market long dominated by banks and U.S. duo Visa and Mastercard that are now being challenged by 'fintechs' offering rival services.

"In practice, this proposal will lead to more innovative financial products and services for users and it will stimulate competition in the financial sector,"

the Commission said in a statement.

EU states and the European Parliament have the final say on the package, with some changes likely.

The reforms aim to make it harder for banks to stop fintechs from opening an account with them, and give fintechs access to payments infrastructure in the same

way as banks.

"We are going to clearly identify the obstacles that the fintechs should never have been encountering," an EU official said.

Electronic payments in the EU has grown from 184.2 trillion euros (\$201.7 trillion) in 2017 to 240 trillion euros in 2021, accelerated by COVID-19.

Protections on data would be strengthened to encourage consumers to use rival services, with redress for unauthorised transactions such as "spoofing" or fraudsters pretending to be a customer's bank.

The legal basis for banks and other payment firms to share information without falling foul of EU data

protection rules is also being made clearer to reinforce the sector's collective capacity to tackle scams, the EU official said.

The European Central Bank is due in October to decide whether to push ahead with a digital euro. The rules proposed on Wednesday would make it legal tender, meaning it would have to

be accepted as a form of payment.

As more consumers switch to contactless forms of payments, Wednesday's package also proposes to formally make euro notes and coins legal tender in a bid to avoid people without bank accounts or having difficulty making electronic payments being excluded.

WORLD

Putin thanks Russians for showing solidarity

MOSCOW

RUSSIAN President Vladimir Putin, in his first national address since Yevgeny Prigozhin, head of the Wagner private military group, launched a brief insurrection on Saturday, thanked Russians for their unity over the incident.

Putin emphasized in the address on Monday evening that prompt measures had been taken from the very beginning to avoid bloodshed. He lauded the courage of military personnel and law enforcement officers and vowed to fulfill his promise to members of the Wagner group that they could go to Belarus, join Russia's military or return to their families.

"Time was needed, among other things, to give those who had made a mistake a chance to come to their senses, to realize that their actions were firmly rejected by society, and that the adventure in which they had been involved had tragic and destructive consequences for Russia and for our state," Reuters quoted Putin as saying.

On Tuesday, the Russian Federal Security Service said it had closed a criminal investigation into the armed rebellion, with no charges against Prigozhin or any of the other participants.

The security agency, explaining its decision in a statement, said that participants in the armed insurrection had "ceased their actions directly aimed at committing the crime".

Putin also expressed gratitude to military personnel, law enforcement and intelligence officers, and the hero pilots who had stood up to stop the mutineers.

"In the confrontation with rebels, our comrades-in-arms, pilots, were killed. They did not flinch and honorably fulfilled their orders and their military duty," Putin said.

"People who were drawn into the rebellion saw that the army and the people were not with them," he said.

Noting that the patriotic feelings of Russians and consolidation of the entire society were crucial in ending the mutiny, Putin said that "this civic solidarity made it clear that any blackmail and at-



Russian President Vladimir Putin attends a meeting with service members at the Kremlin in Moscow, Russia, on Tuesday. (PHOTO / AP)

tempts to create internal turmoil were bound to fail".

He also thanked Belarusian President Alexander Lukashenko for his mediation role in resolving the attempted mutiny.

Wagner fighters took control on Saturday of the southern city of Rostov-on-Don and Russia's southern military headquarters, then drove an armed convoy to within 200 kilometers of Moscow before aborting their march.

Putin said he also appreciated the Wagner fighters "who made the only right choice and refused to start fratricidal bloodshed".

According to state news agency RIA Novosti, Putin later held a meeting with heads of security agencies on Monday night. Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov said the president met with top security and military officials, including Defense Minister Sergei Shoigu.

In Washington, US President Joe Biden sought on Monday to distance the United

States from the attempted rebellion, saying in his first public remarks since the episode that the West had nothing to do with it.

Speaking from the White House, Biden suggested that it was too early to say how the situation would unfold going forward. He also said he might speak again with Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky to coordinate their response after conferring in a phone call on Sunday.

White House national security spokesman John Kirby said the US did not know the details of the deal between Moscow and Prigozhin that ended the mutiny, and that he did not know Prigozhin's whereabouts. "We're not taking sides in this internal matter," he said.

Also on Monday, Putin signed a decree that extends until the end of this year the Russian government's countermeasures against a price cap on Russian oil and oil products imposed by Western countries.

Agencies

Supreme Court continues defending voters' rights

WASHINGTON



US former President Barack Obama, on Tuesday, said that the Supreme Court rejected the fringe independent state legislature theory that threatened to upend state election laws nationwide and made clear that the institution can continue defending voters' rights in North Carolina.

Taking to Twitter, Obama said, "Today, the Supreme Court rejected the fringe independent state legislature theory that threatened to upend our democracy and dismantle our system of checks and balances."

"This ruling rejects the far-right theory that threatened to undermine our democracy, and makes clear that courts can continue defending voters' rights—in North Carolina and in every state. Thanks to @RedistrictFdn and @ErichHolder for helping make this happen," he said in a tweet.

This tweet came after the Supreme Court ruled in a case where it rejected a legal theory that would have radically reshaped how federal elections are conducted by giving state legislatures largely unchecked power to set all sorts of rules for federal elections and to draw congressional maps warped by partisan gerrymandering, as per The New York Times.

The vote was 6 to 3, with Chief Justice John Roberts Jr writing the majority opinion. He said that the Constitution protects voting rights in federal elections and state courts can enforce those provisions.

Chief Justice said that the Constitution "does not exempt state legislatures from the ordinary constraints imposed by state law."

Justices Clarence Thomas, Samuel Alito Jr and Neil Gorsuch dissented.

The case concerned the "independent state legislature" theory. The doctrine is based on a reading of the Constitution's Elections Clause, which says, "The times, places and manner of holding elections for senators and representatives, shall be prescribed in each state by the legislature thereof."

The Republicans, seeking to restore the legislative map last year, have urged the Supreme Court to immediately intervene and also appealed that the state court was not entitled to second-guess the Legislature, reported The New York Times.

After their request, the justices rejected it for immediate intervention, and the election in November was conducted under a map drawn by experts appointed by a state court. That resulted in a 14-member congressional delegation that was evenly divided between Republicans and Democrats, roughly mirroring the state's partisan divisions.

The composition of the North Carolina Supreme Court changed after elections in November, favouring Republicans by a 5-to-2 margin. In what a dissenting justice called a "shameful manipulation of fundamental principles of our democracy and the rule of law," the new majority reversed course, saying the Legislature was free to draw gerrymandered voting districts as it saw fit, according to The New York Times.

ANI

Israel PM Netanyahu updates visiting US Congressional delegation on security matters

TEL AVIV



ISRAEL Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu on Tuesday met at the Prime Minister's Office in Jerusalem with a bipartisan Congressional delegation under the auspices of AIPAC - The America Israel Public Affairs Committee.

The Prime Minister thanked the delegation members for their steadfast support of the State of Israel and their unqualified support of Israel's security. The meeting focused on the Iranian nuclear threat and artificial intelligence technology.

Israel Prime Minister Netanyahu stressed to the members of Congress that the security and intelligence cooperation between the US and Israel is at an all-time peak, and emphasized that the US will always be Israel's most vital ally and irreplaceable ally.

Also participating in the meeting were the Strategic Affairs Minister, the Director of the National Security Council, the Director General of the Prime Minister's Office and the Prime Minister's Foreign Policy Adviser.

ANI

China calls for common security between Israelis, Palestinians

UNITED NATIONS

A Chinese envoy on Tuesday called for efforts to break the cycle of violence between Israelis and Palestinians and strive for common security.

Palestine and Israel are neighbors that cannot be moved away from each other. No party should pursue absolute security at the expense of the security of the other party, said Zhang Jun, China's permanent representative to the United Nations.

The international community must give equal attention to the legitimate security concerns of both sides and promote a vision of common, comprehensive, cooperative, and sustainable security. Both sides must be encouraged to achieve common security through dialogue and negotiation, he told the Security Council.

It is important to break the cycle of violence, he said.

The UN secretary-general's latest report on the Middle East situation provided an alarming account of violence and Palestinian

casualties in the occupied territory, as well as civilian casualties on the Israeli side, said Zhang. "I wish to reiterate China's opposition to unilateral actions that exacerbate tensions in the occupied territory, all violence against civilians, as well as irresponsible provocation and incitement. The occupying power must fulfill its obligations under international humanitarian law and guarantee the security of people and their property in the occupied territory."

It is important to uphold the international rule of law and stop unilateral actions to change the status quo, he said.

The construction of settlements in the occupied territory violates international law and runs counter to the requirements of Security Council Resolution 2334. Israel recently approved amendments that would streamline and expedite the settlement approval process, and approved plans to build thousands of new settlement housing units. China is concerned about the development, said Zhang.



Zhang Jun, China's permanent representative to the United Nations, speaks at a meeting on "The Values of Human Fraternity in Promoting and Sustaining Peace" at the UN headquarters in New York, on June 14, 2023. XINHUA

"Every inch of settlements expansion represents a further squeeze on the living space of Palestine, a further encroachment on the land and resources of the occupied territory, and a further weakening of the two-state solution. We once again urge the cessation of all settlement activities and unilateral actions to change the status quo of the occupied territory," he said.

It is important to honor political commitments and advance the two-state solution, said Zhang.

It should be noted that the cri-

sis and instabilities in the occupied Palestinian territory today are rooted in the occupation and settlement expansion for over half a century and in the protracted stalemate of the Middle East peace process. The fundamental solution to the Palestinian-Israeli conflict and the Palestinian question lies in the resumption of peace talks and the implementation of the two-state solution, he said.

The international community must always place the Palestinian question high on the international agenda and take practical

steps to advance the two-state solution. The Security Council must demonstrate a sense of urgency and be prepared to take meaningful action, and provide oversight and safeguards for the implementation of the political commitments, he said.

The Palestinian question is at the heart of the Middle East issue and bears on the lasting peace, stability, and security in the Middle East.

China has always been upholding fairness and justice on the Palestinian question, and has long firmly supported the Palestinian people's just cause of restoring their legitimate national rights.

China stands ready to work with the international community to actively contribute to a comprehensive, just, and lasting solution to the Palestinian question, the realization of the peaceful co-existence of Palestine and Israel, the common development of the Arab and Jewish peoples, and the lasting peace and stability of the Middle East at an early date, said Zhang.

Xinhua

India, France holds strategic space dialogue in Paris

NEW DELHI

THE inaugural India-France strategic space dialogue was held on Monday in Paris.

"The inaugural India-France Strategic Space Dialogue was held in Paris on 26 June 2023. The Indian side was led by Foreign Secretary Vinay Mohan Kwatra, and the French side by Secretary-General, Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs, Anne-Marie Descotes," read the Ministry of External Affairs press release.

Both India and France have deepened their cooperation to address contemporary trends in international affairs such as unfolding strategic complexities in the Indo-Pacific Region.

In 2022, India and France agreed to set up an Indo-Pacific

Trilateral Development Cooperation Fund that will support sustainable innovative solutions for countries in the Indo-Pacific region.

India and France's strategic relationship has improved in the past few years. Air India will acquire 250 aircraft, including 40 wide-body planes, from Airbus, Tata Sons Chairman N Chandrasekaran said in February at a virtual event attended by Prime Minister Narendra Modi and French President Emmanuel Macron.

France has emerged as a key defence

partner for India, becoming the second largest defence supplier in 2017-2021.

India and France support a multi-polar world order. France has continued to support India's claim for permanent membership of the Security Council and the reforms of the United Nations.

France has provided consistent support to India's candidature for membership in all four Multilateral Export Control regimes, viz. Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG), the Missile Technology Control Regime (MTCR), the Wassenaar Arrangement (WA) and the

Australia Group (AG).

France's support was vital in India's accession to MTCR, WA and AG while France continues to support India's bid for accession to the NSG.

India and France have had regular exchanges of visits at the highest level. PM Modi is expected to attend this year's Bastille Day Parade as Guest of Honour on July 14 in Paris.

PM Modi has been invited by French President Emmanuel Macron to attend the Parade in Paris.

ANI

SCO sees rapid increase in number of sister cities

THE Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) Forum on People-to-People Friendship and the Forum on Friendship Cities were recently held in Qingdao city, east China's Shandong Province.

According to data released by the forums, China and relevant SCO countries have formed over 450 pairs of friendship cities in the past 22 years since the organization's establishment. The mutually beneficial cooperation among friendship cities of the SCO has led to the implementation of a large number of projects for the benefit of the people in new areas such as

smart city governance, data economy and innovation development.

Friendship among the people is a fundamental force for world peace and development and is a basic precondition for win-win cooperation.

Chinese President Xi Jinping proposed to hold an SCO non-governmental friendship forum in November 2020, which received strong endorsement and warm support from SCO member states.

At the SCO Samarkand Summit last September, President Xi proposed to host an SCO forum on sister cities, which further enriched

the connotation of the SCO in promoting non-governmental friendly cooperation.

Bishkek, capital of Kyrgyzstan, and Qingdao established sister-city relations in 2021. Deng Xiaoping Street in the west part of Bishkek is the starting section of a road between the Kyrgyz capital and Osh, the second largest city in Kyrgyzstan located in the south of the country.

Last year, Qingdao and Bishkek conducted cooperation in the upgrading construction of the street, which was included in the list of deliverables of the meeting of heads

of state of China and Kyrgyzstan by the website of the President of the Kyrgyz Republic.

Human beings share a common future, said Deputy Prime Minister of Kyrgyzstan Edil Baisalov. To achieve modernization, a country needs to pursue common development through solidarity and cooperation.

Non-governmental friendship is conducive to promoting solidarity and cooperation and jointly addressing global challenges. Supporting the establishment of sister-city relations and comprehensively advancing sub-national and

sister-city cooperation have continuously expanded the "circle of friends" among SCO members.

Qingdao, for instance, has expanded exchanges and cooperation with cities in SCO countries on all fronts, and has now established friendship-city relations or confirmed its intention in this regard with 15 cities in 12 relevant SCO countries, including its new sister cities such as the Tajik capital of Dushanbe, Bishkek, and Armenia's capital Yerevan.

As of the end of March 2023, relevant SCO countries had had 419 investment projects in Qingdao, with

the utilized foreign investment totaling \$240 million. In the first three months of this year, relevant SCO countries set up 13 projects in Qingdao, with the actual arrival of foreign investment reaching \$380,000.

People-to-people friendly exchanges among relevant SCO countries and mutually beneficial cooperation among friendship cities have witnessed fruitful highlights, and the "Shanghai Spirit" has gained wide acceptance, said Lin Songtian, president of the Chinese People's Association for Friendship with Foreign Coun-

tries. Lin added that there are more and more member states, observer states and dialogue partners of the SCO, which fully demonstrates how the 'Shanghai Spirit,' with main themes of mutual trust, mutual benefit, equality, consultation, respect for diversity of civilizations and pursuit of common development, is in line with the trend of the times, wins the sincere support of the people, and sets an example for building a new type of international relations.

People's Daily

Spokesperson: Developed countries failed climate promise

BEIJING

DEVELOPED countries have yet to deliver on their promise of mobilizing \$100 billion per year for climate action in developing countries, a promise made 14 years ago, a Chinese foreign ministry spokesperson said on Tuesday.

According to a recent study led by the University of Leeds and published in the UK journal *Nature Sustainability*, almost 90 percent of excess carbon emissions come from developed countries such as the United States, who could be liable to pay \$170 trillion in climate reparations to low-emitting countries to ensure targets to curtail climate breakdown are met.

In response to a related query, spokesperson Mao Ning told a daily news briefing that this research proves that developed countries have historical responsibilities, legal obligations and moral responsibilities for climate change.

"They need to take a lead in drastically cutting their carbon emissions and reach net zero carbon emissions much earlier than 2050, and create space for developing countries' sustainable develop-

ment," Mao said, adding that developed countries also need to provide support to developing countries in finance, technology and capacity-building.

Regrettably, however, developed countries have yet to deliver on their promise of mobilizing \$100 billion per year for climate action in developing countries—a promise made 14 years ago, and to offer a roadmap for doubling adaptation finance, said the spokesperson.

She said China is a doer in ecological conservation and climate governance, and will remain committed to working actively and prudently toward the goals of reaching peak carbon emissions and carbon neutrality, and provide support and help to fellow developing countries for climate response under the frameworks of green Belt and Road and South-South cooperation.

"We hope developed countries will shoulder their historical responsibilities, deliver on their commitments at an early date, step up financial, technological and capacity-building support for developing countries, and work for substantive progress in global climate governance," she added. *Xinhua*



Mao Ning, spokesperson for China's Foreign Ministry, takes a question during a regular press conference in Beijing, China. File photo

Sierra Leone's President Julius Maada Bio re-elected for 2nd time

FREETOWN

SIERRA LEONE'S President Julius Maada Bio has been re-elected for a second term in office on Tuesday. The New York Times reported citing the country's electoral commission.

The election results have been announced amid concerns over a lack of transparency in the vote counting and sporadic episodes of violence. Julius Maada Bio won 56 per cent of the vote while Samura Kamara, the leading opposition candidate, finished second with 41 per cent of the vote, The New York Times reported.

The election conducted on Saturday was a rematch of the 2018 contest in which Julius Maada Bio secured victory against Samura Kamara.

According to the electoral commission, voter turnout was at around 77 per cent. More than 3.3 million voters had registered to vote in Sierra Leone, which has a population of 8.4 million people, according to The New York Times report.

The voting on Saturday was mostly peaceful. However, the tensions increased on Sunday when security forces surrounded the headquarters of the All People's Congress, which is Samura Kamara's party as supporters were celebrating local results.

The police fired tear gas and a woman was shot dead, The New York Times reported. Party officials have accused security forces of firing live rounds. However, Sierra Leonean police have denied the charges.

As per the news report, Sierra Leone is facing an economic crisis, with inflation, unemployment and food insecurity in West Africa. However, Julius Maada Bio urged the citizens to give him five more years to follow an education initiative that has sent an additional one million children to school.

Julius Maada Bio has been accused of overseeing violent repression of protests, including last summer in which more than two dozen died in protests against the increase in prices, The New York Times reported.

Bio is a former military officer who participated in two coups during the civil war in Sierra Leone in the 1990s. He briefly ruled Sierra Leone in 1996 as the head of a military junta. However, he later handed over power to an elected president.

ANI

EU warns of climate-fueled conflicts, geoengineering risks

BRUSSELS

The European Union will call on countries to prepare for "spill over" effects from increased climate change-driven conflicts, according to a draft document, and warn of the need to assess new risks posed by large-scale technological interventions that alter the climate as a potential route to tackle global warming.

In the draft paper due to be published on Wednesday, the European Commission said action was needed from national governments and Brussels to address increasing risks posed by climate change.

"We should prepare ourselves for increased

spill-over effects on the European Union," reads the draft, seen by Reuters.

"These can arise though increased demand for aid, the disruption of supply chains or with people fleeing from uninhabitable areas or severe adverse conditions at home, with the potential of internal displacement and increased irregular migration," it added.

Climate change worsens conflict risks in fragile areas, by unleashing destructive weather or harming crop yields - exacerbating food insecurity and destroying people's livelihoods. In West Africa's Sahel, for example, the United Nations has warned climate change



In this undated file photo, the European Union flags in front of EU headquarters in Brussels, Belgium. XINHUA

risks unleashing decades of armed conflict and displacement.

The Commission said

the EU would start analyzing a range of climate impacts related to security, such as migration, and as-

sess the security implications of a global shift away from fossil fuels.

Non-profit group Clean

Air Task Force said more governments need to take expand their climate change policies to be more inclusive of other risk factors.

"Decarbonization pathways that do not account for energy security, economic growth, development, and that fail to reflect other external risk factors are extremely fragile," said Lee Beck, a senior director at the group.

The draft paper, which could change before it is published, also flagged new and "poorly understood" risks associated with geoengineering - potential large-scale technological interventions to shift the climate, with an aim of cooling the earth.

"Guided by the precautionary principle, the EU will support international efforts to assess comprehensively the risks and uncertainties of climate interventions," the paper reads.

It added that the EU would also promote talks on a possible international framework to govern such technologies.

These methods - which could include, for example, spraying sulfate aerosols into the stratosphere to reflect more sunlight back into space - have not been attempted at scale, and remain deeply controversial, with scientists warning of ethical issues and potential unintended consequences. *Agencies*

Food bank charity: 1 in 7 Britons faced hunger in 2022

LONDON

ONE in seven people in the United Kingdom faced hunger last year because they did not have enough money, according to a report published yesterday by food bank charity the Trussell Trust.

It said this equates to 11.3 million people, more than double the population of Scotland, and blamed a dysfunctional social security system, as well as a cost of living crisis that is showing little sign of easing.

Britain is the world's sixth-biggest economy but its citizens have been pressured for more than a year by high inflation which has outstripped pay growth for almost all workers.

Government forecasters estimate UK households are in the midst of the biggest two-year squeeze in living standards since comparable records started in the 1950s.

The Trussell Trust's network of 1,300 food bank centers across the UK provided a record 3 million food parcels in the year to March, up 37 percent and more than double the amount provided five years ago.

"This consistent upward trajectory exposes that it is weaknesses in the social security system that are driving food bank need, rather than just the pandemic or cost of living crisis," it said.

The charity said that 7 percent of the UK popula-



Shoppers buy food in a supermarket in London, Aug 17, 2022. (PHOTO / AP)

tion was supported by charitable food support, including food banks, yet 71 percent of people facing hunger had not yet accessed any form of charitable food support.

It also noted that one in five people forced to turn to food banks in its network are in a working household and called on the UK government to ensure the benefits system covers essential costs.

"We know people are struggling, which is why we're providing record financial support worth an average 3,300 pounds (\$4,206) per household," said a spokesperson for the Department for Work and Pensions in response to the report.

The government has also raised benefits and the state pension in line with inflation, increased the minimum wage and supported families with food, energy and other essential costs, said the spokesperson.

Prime Minister Rishi Sunak's key economic pledge to halve overall inflation in 2023 before a probable 2024 election has been undermined by persistently high food inflation, outpacing the broader inflation rate across the whole economy and adding strain to household

budgets already stretched by higher taxes and mortgage rates.

Food and drink inflation was running at 18.3 percent in May according to the most recent official data, and 14.6 percent in June according to the most recent industry data.

On Tuesday, British supermarket executives rejected allegations they were profiteering at the expense of consumers through the cost of living crisis.

Soaring food prices have contributed to the biggest squeeze on living standards in Britain since records began in the 1950s, and prompted questions about who is responsible. Trade unions and politicians have accused the supermarkets of "greedflation", saying they've been too slow in passing on lower producer prices to consumers.

Heavy fighting erupts in Sudan's capital ahead of Eid al-Adha

KHARTOUM

HEAVY fighting erupted between the Sudanese army and the paramilitary Rapid Support Forces (RSF) in the Sudanese capital of Khartoum on Tuesday, on the eve of the Muslim festival of Eid al-Adha.

Heavy artillery fire and gunshots were heard in parts of Khartoum, local witnesses said, after RSF commander Mohamed Hamdan Dagalo announced on Monday in an audio recording posted on Facebook a two-day "unilateral cease-fire" ahead of the festival.

The armed conflict in Sudan has so far shown no sign of abating since it began on April 15, despite the cease-fire deals reached intermittently between the warring sides over the past ten weeks.

In addition to causing significant property damage and looting in Khartoum, where foreign diplomatic missions have also been targeted, the conflict has also caused turmoil in other parts of Sudan, particularly in Darfur, a vast western region that borders Chad.

In a statement issued on Saturday, the

Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) called for immediate actions to stop the killing of civilians who were fleeing El Geneina, the capital city of West Darfur State.

The UN refugee agency warned on Tuesday that an earlier projection that conflict in Sudan would prompt one million people to flee across its borders is likely to be surpassed.

So far, the conflict between warring military factions that began in mid-April has caused nearly 600,000 people to escape into neighboring countries, including Egypt, Chad, South Sudan, and Central African Republic.

"Unfortunately, looking at the trends, looking at the situation in Darfur, we're likely to go beyond 1 million," Raouf Mazou, UNHCR Assistant High Commissioner for Operations, said in response to a question about its estimate in April for the coming six months, reports Reuters from Geneva.

The Sudanese Doctors Syndicate said that more than 1,000 people had been killed in El Geneina by armed militias.



People ride with furniture and other items atop a truck moving along a road from Khartoum to Wad Madani at the locality of Kamlin, about 80 km southeast of Khartoum, on June 22, 2023. AFP

The Guardian

SPORT



Dar es Salaam's youths dance in an event for celebration of Day of the African Child in the city recently. The event, coordinated by WAJIKI- Community Based Organization (CBO) fighting gender based violence and sextortion- in cooperation with Makumbusho Ward's Elders Union, was part of campaign termed 'Safari Salama Bila Rushwa ya Ngoni Inawezekana', sponsored by Women Fund Tanzania (WFT). PHOTO: CORRESPONDENT SABATO KASIKA

Simba SC board promises to sign top players, sets CAF CL semi-final target

By Correspondent Nassir Nchimbi

SIMBA SC is reorganizing and planning to bounce back well next season after enduring two seasons without lifting any major trophy.

The Msimbazi Street outfit has had a season overhaul of its squad, with several senior domestic and foreign professionals having been released to match the ambitions and vision of the club.

At the start of the 2022/23 season, Simba SC Board of Directors had set a target of ensuring the club clinches a domestic double and reaches the semi-finals of the CAF Champions League, but the side failed on all fronts.

However, the Roberto Oliveira-coached side put up a spirited display in the quarterfinals of the CAF Champions League, which saw the outfit take on Morocco's Wydad Casablanca.

In the last eight's first-leg duel between the two clubs held in Dar es Salaam on April 22, Simba SC registered a hard-fought 1-0 victory.

The Tanzanian side later went down 4-3 to the Moroccan football powerhouse on penalties in the rematch in Casablanca on April 28 after succumbing to a 1-0 loss that led to a 1-1 aggregate scoreline forcing penalties.

According to Simba SC Board of Directors Chairman Salim Abdallah, plans to ensure that the club has a competitive squad next season are underway.

"We will make good signings for the next season of the league, for

now, our goals are to make sure we go past the quarterfinal stage (CAF Champions League) and enter the semi-finals," Abdallah said.

"On behalf of the Board of Directors, I take this opportunity to apologize to all Simba SC fans, we didn't have a good season because we lost all titles," Abdallah added.

The Board of Directors Chairman noted: "We have had an injury crisis on the squad, the players we registered this season didn't perform so well, but that's football we are now gearing up for next season."

Simba SC is currently carrying out a massive clear out of the squad, having released up to nine players including veterans Jonas Mkude, Erasto Nyoni, and goalkeeper Beno Kakolanya.

It has been reported that more senior players including the long-serving captain, John Bocco, are also in discussion to either extend their stay or part ways with the side as the Msimbazi Street outfit prepares to bring in top players to stop Yanga's dominance.

Simba SC dominated the Mainland Tanzania top flight by winning the showdown trophy four seasons in a row.

Yanga, led by the club president Hersi Said and investor Ghalib Salim Mohamed, then wrestled dominance from the outfit's age-old rival.

The club has since managed to lift every major trophy on the domestic scene successively, leaving Simba SC trophyless.

Over 1,400 junior footballers set to attend clinic in Dar

By Correspondent Joseph Mchekadona

MORE than 1400 youth from 139 districts across Tanzania are expected to attend training on modern football coordinated by an organization, known as Brazuka, and its partners.

Dar es Salaam-based EFM radio station's Operations Director Dennis Busulwa said the project is aimed at giving many youths a chance to explore their football career.

Brazuka is based in Songea and Busulwa said the partnership between the organization and media outlet is targeting to take the country's soccer to another level.

"If we are serious in the development of football in the country from

the grassroots, this is the way to go, we want to see the country has many young players who can play football anywhere in the world," he said.

Director of Brazuka, Mchata Erick, said they are committed to the cause, adding the idea of the partnership has come after a study had revealed that the country has many talented football youths but they lack fundamentals of the game.

Tanzania Football Federation (TFF) Technical Director, Oscar Mirambo, hailed the partnership, describing it as great.

"This is good for our football and we must encourage others to venture into such programs, it exposes new football talents," he said.

Improbable that the fans, members are concerned with balance sheets

By Correspondent John Kimbute

YOUNG Africans SC (Yanga) has lately concluded an annual meeting that must have been the most peaceful and relaxed in recent years, as the club had what was, by all accounts, a massive success.

They had a domestic double and attained the final of the CAF Confederation Cup, and especially for the local titles they did better than their next-street rivals, Simba SC, and at times it is all that matters.

When the club achieved as much as it did this season, clearly budgeted cash was well spent.

That is a maxim of sporting fraternities like other performance-based organizations or communities, that so long as what they live for is being attained, the rest is not important.

No one will seek to know how much a church leader spends if people are being healed, in which case a club needs to score the goals and all will be peaceful.

There will be a few questions about registration cash, sponsorship sums, auxiliary expenditures like allowances or commissions, etc if the goals are scored.

In other words, the cash reports are meant to create a serene atmosphere that money is being well spent, where the proof is not the math as given by the office of either the treasurer or the president as the case may be, but club performance.

What satisfies the membership or the rank and file is less the math than the results, whether they feel well about their performance during the year or they do not.

And in case there is reason for their feeling bad about the season the math will be stridently questioned.

Similarly, the reason for strident questioning won't



Yanga fans cheer on as the Tanzanian club came up against Algeria's USM Alger in a 2022/23 CAF Confederation Cup final's first leg played at Benjamin Mkapa Stadium in Dar es Salaam last month. PHOTO: CORRESPONDENT JUMANNE JUMA

be the math per se but politics, namely putting at issue the leadership, to figure out if it is still the best given the season's outcome.

What this implies is that so long as the leadership is seen to be delivered, they have a privilege to the money they are given to watch over, and if they fail to deliver, that privilege ought to be given to someone else, on precisely the same premise. It is a game of well-known cheating but one has to qualify for it.

On that score, questioning the math at an annual meeting is less an issue of formal accounting than it is club politics, where the faction leaders look around to see if there is any opening for attacking the leader.

It does not follow that performing below average always leads to questioning the math, as a powerful club can as well perform below average but have some good points. These are usually noticed in minor tournaments, for instance, Mapinduzi Cup or earlier, the CECAFA Kagame Cup.

There is another level of the math in an annual meeting that is less related to the leadership than to loyalty to the sponsors, though this level of contention is a bit of a gamble.

Each major faction in club loyalties wishes to be in the

good books of the sponsor and thus they may not rush to make a point in expressing such dissatisfaction.

Often the sponsorship (these days what is ordinarily known as an investment) is conducted in alliance with a section of the leadership, in which case a dispute questioning the usefulness of the leadership spills over into sponsorship.

Still, it isn't hard to obtain a situation where a rival sponsor is waiting in the wings, such that a claimant to leadership leads his group to attack incumbents in such a way as to faintly express disloyalty to the sponsors (the plural as relating to usual company status).

When a visible level of disloyalty is registered, danger starts to stalk the horizon of the club, and the rank and file will need energetic reassurance that all is well.

There was a time during the just-ended season when the Simba SC sponsor/investor went on Twitter to say 'he will never leave Simba SC'. Yes, why?

Despite that, Yanga's president Hersi Said has been in the saddle for upwards of three years at the moment, no such contention has arrived there yet.

And indeed his position is a bit perplexing as, in sponsorship terms, he does not hold the bags

of money but his employer - who a widely circulated social media image recently showed a presumed Simba SC card belonging to him.

Checking with some top insiders at the club by senior sports writers, by their own account, appeared to validate the card as factual, and real.

That makes the sponsor take the same psychological posture as controversial club fellow traveler Haji Manara, whose soccer sympathies lie with the Msimbazi Street side but is on the Jangwani Street side's assignment for business, using skills.

It follows that GSM Group's owner is at Jangwani Street outfit for publicity of his businesses as is usually the case, but it also has a sticking end.

It removes the club rank and file from their psychological comfort zone to business affinity, with the proviso that they have to handle their club's president very well, as he probably has his sentimental loyalties in the club and will do his utmost for it.

That is not what transpired at a raucous executive committee meeting before the annual meeting, people trying to take advantage of why Yanga did not clinch the CAF Confederation Cup title, that sort of thing!



Upendo Queens netball outfit's Hellen Matiko (2nd R) seeks to outfox NSSF squad's netballers as the teams locked horns in this year's National First Division League clash which took place Benjamin Mkapa Stadium recently. NSSF team defeated Upendo Queens 67-15. PHOTO: CORRESPONDENT JUMANNE JUMA

Simba SC denies Onyango's contract termination request rumours

By Correspondent Joseph Mchekadona

IMBA SC has dismissed rumours that the side's Kenyan defender Joash Onyango has written it asking for the termination of his contract.

Ahmed Ally, Simba SC's Media and Communication Manager, noted in an interview in Dar es Salaam yesterday the club has not received any letter from

Onyango and described the rumours as works of social media.

"Onyango has not written us a letter requesting for termination of his contract, we are just hearing that from people I'm sure that it is the work of social media, should there be anything from him we will let the public know," he said.

Onyango joined Simba SC in August 2020 from record Foot-

ball Kenya Federation Premier League champion Gor Mahia on a two-year contract, which was extended in 2022.

Since he joined the club, Onyango has played an integral part in the side's success, helping it clinch Premier League silverware. The center-back was moreover one of the players that have propelled the outfit to the CAF Champions League

quarterfinals on three occasions and CAF Confederation Cup's last-eight round once.

Meanwhile, Ally disclosed that midfielder Jonas Mkude, released by the club recently, will be given an honours parade and other gifts during the 'Simba Day' celebration in October.

He said the treatment is meant to appreciate the midfielder's contribution to the club.

Chelsea on course to bank over £150m in sales as Loftus-Cheek continues exodus

By Matt Law

CHELSEA's summer sales are continuing to pick up pace after the club agreed a fee with AC Milan for midfielder Ruben Loftus-Cheek.

Loftus-Cheek is now on course to join the exodus of players from Stamford Bridge, for a fee in the region of £15 million plus add-ons, with Milan also interested in Christian Pulisic.

Chelsea are on course to earn over £150 million in player sales, with Mateo Kovacic joining Manchester City and Kai Havertz on the verge of a move to Arsenal. Elsewhere, Kalidou Koulibaly is set to be followed to Saudi Arabia by Hakim Ziyech and Edouard Mendy.

Milan's rivals Inter are to hold more talks with Chelsea this week over a proposed deal to re-sign Romelu Lukaku, who remains determined to stay with the Champions League finalists.

Chelsea have already rejected one offer from Inter to take Lukaku on another season-long loan, but the Italians are set to make a new offer.

Inter are likely to propose signing Lukaku on another season-long loan, but this time with the option to buy him for €30 million next summer. Chelsea are expected to insist on an obligation, rather than an option but there is a feeling in Italy that a deal can be agreed.

It remains to be seen whether or not Inter could eventually try to sign Lukaku permanently this summer if they sell goalkeeper Andre Onana, who Chelsea were interested in and who is now a target of Manchester United.

Lukaku has told Chelsea that his priority is to return to Inter and sources close to the player have been dismissive of supposed interest from AC Milan, while the player is unlikely to be keen on the prospect of moving to Juventus.

Chelsea had hoped to sell Lukaku to Saudi Arabian club Al-Hilal, but the Belgian is yet to accept the offer he was made and wants to focus on trying to return to Inter.

Having successfully set up deals to sell a host of wantaway players, Chelsea are keen to find a solution for Lukaku as quickly as possible.

Sources in Italy believe that the club's tough stance over a sale will eventually have to soften with all parties acknowledging that forcing Lukaku to return to Chelsea could be damaging.

New head coach Mauricio Pochettino starts work at Chelsea next Monday with the players due in from Tuesday. Those who have been on international duty, including Lukaku, have longer off.

Pochettino ideally does not want to take any wantaway players with him to the United States for Chelsea's pre-season tour, which the squad fly out for on July 17.

That leaves Chelsea needing to strike a deal for Lukaku before then to avoid a potentially awkward situation in which the striker has to be potentially left behind to train.

THE TELEGRAPH

Arsenal and West Ham United in advanced talks to agree structure of £105m Declan Rice deal

By Sam Dean

ARSENAL and West Ham United are now in advanced talks over the future of Declan Rice, with the two clubs discussing the details of the England midfielder's potential record £105 million transfer.

On Tuesday night Arsenal submitted a sensational bid of £100 million, plus £5 million in add-ons, as they responded to interest from Manchester City with a proposal that would shatter their transfer record and make Rice one of the most expensive players in history.

West Ham did not immediately accept Arsenal's offer but talks are now ongoing over the structuring of the payments. Throughout this process, West Ham have insisted that they want the money to be paid over a short time period, rather than spread out over the course of five years.

Arsenal's willingness to meet West Ham's £100 million valuation means that an end to the transfer saga is now fast approaching, although City's response in the coming hours could yet change the situation once again.

City's opening offer, of £80 million plus £10 million in add-ons, was rejected by West Ham earlier this week. The Treble winners have the financial firepower to match or even exceed Arsenal's latest offer, should they choose to do so.

Arsenal have been confident for months that Rice wants to make the move to the Emirates Stadium and the club's third offer is a reflection of how eager they are to rebuild their midfield around the 24-year-old.

Should a deal be agreed in which Arsenal pay a guaranteed £100 million for Rice, the midfielder's base fee would be level with the £100 million that City paid for Jack Grealish in the summer of 2021.

Including add-ons, Rice would become the second most expensive British player of all time, behind Jude Bellingham, his England team-mate.

Bellingham's recent move to Real Madrid from Borussia Dortmund could be worth £115 million if add-ons are achieved, on top of an initial fee of £88.5 million.

THE TELEGRAPH

Why Nicolas Jackson now has the tools to make Chelsea a free-scoring Mauricio Pochettino team

By Ben McAleer

CHELSEA's biggest issue last season was the inability to simply put the ball in the back of the net. Only four teams scored fewer Premier League goals than the Blues (38), with even relegated pair Leeds and Leicester netting more.

Strengthening the frontline was always the priority for a west London side in need of a refresh this summer. Yet they had to strike a balance.

Chelsea's squad remains incredibly bloated, though the departures of N'Golo Kante and Kalidou Koulibaly have helped, at the very least, cut the wage bill. Hakim Ziyech, Kai Havertz, Edouard Mendy and Mason Mount are expected to follow the pair out of the Stamford Bridge exit as the squad is streamlined.

We're not yet in July, but the Blues have at least made their first move to correct their goal issues: Christopher Nkunku has arrived from RB Leipzig on the back of a solid Bundesliga campaign that saw him net 16 times - no player in Germany's top tier scored more.



Nicolas Jackson

The 25-year-old won't be the only forward to rock up in the capital, however, with Nicolas Jackson set to follow suit.

Jackson was prepped for a move to Bournemouth in January, only to fail a medical, and was subsequently linked with a move to Aston Villa this summer - yet Chelsea have won the

race for the 22-year-old, who scored 12 goals and provided four assists in LaLiga last season, a fine return for a player who registered just 1603 minutes of game time.

Of those 12 goals, ten were scored since the turn of the year; only former Real Madrid hitman Karim Benzema (12) bagged more in Spain's top tier in the

first half of 2023.

Crucially, Jackson knows exactly where the goal is. Feed the Senegalese star and he'll score. Of the 120 players to muster 25 or more shots, Jackson returned the best conversion rate (29.3 per cent) in the 22/23 LaLiga campaign.

Despite a goalshy season, Chelsea still averaged the eighth most key

passes per game (9.9) in the Premier League, a return that can be improved upon, but a reasonable base nonetheless. In addition, the Blues ranked tenth for big chances created (57), yet in turn missed the sixth most (52). Kai Havertz was the biggest offender, missing 14 clear-cut goalscoring opportunities, but with the German set to leave for Arsenal there is room for a new striker at Stamford Bridge.

Jackson, by contrast, performed superbly when the chances were laid out on a plate, returning a clear-cut conversion rate of 56.3 per cent - the best in Spain's top flight last season.

However, there is more to Jackson's game than just scoring goals. He's not an old-fashioned No.9, but rather a modern-day forward, who looks to link the play as well as get on the end of chances. An average of 1.2 key passes per 90 minutes is a respectable average, while a pass success rate of 76.4 per cent from 17.9 passes per 90 are solid figures for a striker.

With Mauricio Pochettino expected to use a 4-2-3-1 setup, he'll need his leading frontman to

work his way into the box and, where needed, hold up possession before laying the ball on for his teammates. Jackson, then, ticks the right boxes.

Considering the exciting wingers at Pochettino's disposal - who'll undoubtedly benefit from a full pre-season in a settled environment under the Argentine's watchful eye - and the possibility of Nkunku operating in the No.10 role as a second striker, Jackson's willingness to bring others into play means Chelsea should quickly dwarf their 38-goal haul from last season.

The Senegal star isn't perhaps the same headline-stealing hitman in the form of Victor Osimhen that some supporters may crave, but then if Jackson is the ideal fit, is that really an issue?

Chelsea will be landing a player who will benefit the current crop of attackers on the books at Stamford Bridge and, over the longer term, can become the complete centre-forward with the right coaching. Pochettino, after all, did turn Harry Kane into a world-beater.

THE INDEPENDENT

US team for golf's Ryder Cup could be loaded, and some stars could be left out

BY DOUG FERGUSON

RYDER Cup captain Zach Johnson still has time on his side, just not as much. He also keeps getting more candidates for his U.S. team, which isn't making the job any easier.

And it's no longer about Brooks Koepka or anyone else from LIV Golf.

"There's still a lot of golf between now and then," Johnson said that Sunday morning in May at the PGA Championship, a few hours before Brooks Koepka showed off his major swagger at Oak Hill with a victory that did more than restore his reputation as Big Game Brooks.

It moved him to No. 2 in the Ryder Cup standings. Given that Koepka appears to be back at full strength, that's not such a bad thing.

Now consider the last two weeks.

Wyndham Clark showed plenty of moxie when he outplayed Rory McIlroy on the back nine of Los Angeles Country Club and won the U.S. Open. Coupled with his victory in an elevated event at the Wells Fargo Championship, Clark moved past Koepka to No. 2 and is all but assured of his Ryder Cup debut in Rome.

And then Keegan Bradley battled the internal pressure of playing before a home crowd in New England and won the Travelers Championship for his second victory of the year. That big yell he let loose on the 18th green brought back images of his Ryder Cup debut in 2012.



Zach Johnson poses with the Ryder Cup after being announced as United States' captain for 2023. Agencies

He moved to No. 7 in the standings.

Bradley hasn't played in a Ryder Cup since 2014, an unhappy memory in Scotland from Captain Tom Watson benching him in three of the five sessions and Europe celebrating on home soil.

The thought of playing in another Ryder Cup meant every bit as much as the \$3.6 million he won.

"It is the first thing I said to my wife walking up to sign my card," Bradley said Sunday. "This is a pretty big step towards doing that. I'm 37 years old. I hope to play in multiple more. I don't know how many more with everybody so good and the young kids, just the team is incredible."

"I would love to go to Rome and be a part of that team."

Right when it looks as though the American

team has a core of Ryder Cup stars who finally can swing the pendulum in its favor, someone new - or something new - comes along.

From that '21 team that gave Europe its worst loss ever in the Ryder Cup, three players defected to something new (LIV Golf). Among the potential newcomers to the big stage are Max Homa and Cameron Young, Clark and Sam Burns, the latter narrowly left off

the last Ryder Cup team. The core from Whistling Straits included Justin Thomas, Jordan Spieth and Collin Morikawa, all of them multiple major champions, none with a victory over the last 12 months.

The matches start Sept. 29 in Rome. The leading six players through the BMW Championship automatically qualify, and then Johnson says he will lean on those six players and his assistant captains to determine the six wildcard picks to give the team a sense of ownership.

Time on his side? Eight weeks remain before qualifying ends. That includes a major (British Open) and a pair of \$20 million events from the FedEx Cup playoffs. Most of the top players won't be playing more than four of those eight weeks.

The leading six in the Ryder Cup standings going into the Rocket Mortgage Classic are Scottie Scheffler, Clark, Koepka, Xander Schauffele, Patrick Cantlay and Homa.

Next in line are Bradley, Spieth, Young, Burns, Thomas and Morikawa.

Still to be determined? Plenty. The resurgent Rickie Fowler and Tony Finau, who has played on the last four U.S. teams and has two wins this season, are

part of the conversation.

Dustin Johnson is probably too far back that even a claret jug won't allow him to qualify, but he will be hard to ignore if he were to win the final major of the year. The last (healthy) American to win a major and get left off the Ryder Cup team was Todd Hamilton in 2004.

Turnover is nothing new for the Americans.

When they manhandled Europe at Hazeltine in 2016 to end a three-match losing streak, only six of them were on the charter flight to France two years later (another loss).

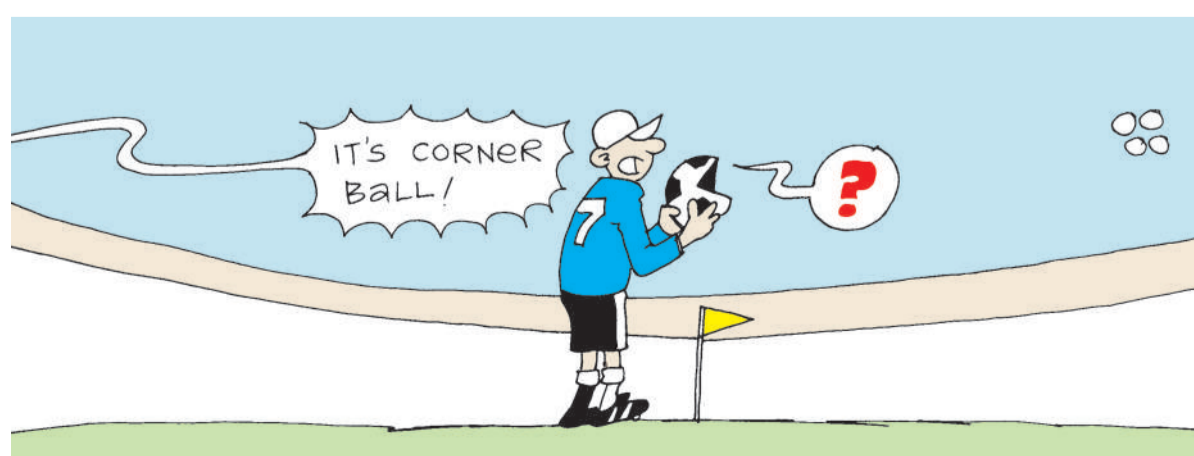
Five players from the dominant Ryder Cup team at Whistling Straits didn't make it to the next U.S. team 12 months later in the Presidents Cup - three because of LIV, two because of injury (Harris English, Daniel Berger).

But the way golf has gone over the last few months must make Zach Johnson wonder how the next two months will play out. Six players qualify. Twelve players go to Rome. Someone always gets squeezed out, and that will be the case again. Johnson knew that when he accepted the job.

Now it's a matter of waiting for the music to stop to find out who doesn't have a seat.

AP

Gwiji by David Chikoko



SPORT

Why Jackson now has the tools to make Chelsea a free-scoring Mauricio Pochettino team

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Azam FC midfielder, James Akaminko. PHOTO: COURTESY OF AZAM FC

Azam FC continues to retain key players

By Correspondent Nassir Nchimbi

AZAM FC has continued to retain the club's key players ahead of the squad rebuild for next season after axing various players that failed to deliver.

Center-back Malickou Ndoye is the latest player to sign a one-year deal extension with the club after Sospeter Bajana, James Akaminko, Daniel Amoah, and Nathaniel Chilambo, all signing for the club for the 2024/2025 season.

Azam FC has already signed a prolific midfielder Feisal Salum on a three-deal from Yanga to fight for the Premier League top honour next season after experiencing nine years of trophy drought.

Azam FC has stated it is eyeing to sign high-profile players who will add value and bring glory to the side's participation in the 2023/24 CAF Confederation Cup.

The outfit is adamant that it aims to occupy a place among the prominent outfits in the continent next season.

The ice cream makers have already vowed to improve their squad ahead of the action-packed 2023/24 season for the sake of doing well in both domestic and African inter-club competitions.

Already, Azam FC has parted ways with 10 staff including players and technical bench members who were part of their brigade that managed to sail through to the Azam Sports Federation Cup (ASFC) final, as well as settle for third spot in the Premier League standings.

The recent victim of the reshuffle was veteran defender Aggrey Morris, who was accorded farewell after serving the outfit he had joined in 2009 and was thereafter the club's assistant coach.

His departure came a few days following the release of Kalimangonga Ongala, who was also serving as an assistant coach and was the one leading the team's tactical section in most of the club's competitive matches.

Others who have been shown the exit door include goalkeeper Wilbrow Maseke, who began his career at Azam FC's academy before being promoted to senior.

The axed list also contains Cleophae Mkandala, Rodgers Kola, Kenneth Muguna, Bruce Kangwa, Ismail Aziz, Dani Cadena (goalkeeping coach), and Moadh Hiraoui (doctor).

The club's Media and Information Officer, Hashem Ibwe, commented on the issue and reiterated that they intend to rope in new players with desirable standards to parade at the club.

Ibwe revealed: "We will bring on board players with enough exposure to Premier League and CAF Confederation Cup games."

"At the moment, we are extending contracts with players who still have a lot to contribute to our team's success while, at the same time, we are releasing those who will not be part of our squad for the upcoming campaign," he said.

Last season Azam FC finished third in NBC Premier League with 59 points after battling it out in 30 games and came up short as runner-up in the ASFC following a 1-0 loss to eventual champion Yanga in the showdown's final.

Azam FC triggers contract extensions for Amoah, Malickou Ndoye

new one-year contract to remain in our club. The contract will keep him at the Azam Complex Stadium until 2025."

Amoah, one of the best central defenders in the NBC Premier League, signed for Azam FC in August 2016 from Medeama FC of Ghana, going on to play for seven consecutive seasons at Chamazi.

Following the departure of Zimbabwean wingback Bruce Kangwa, Amoah is now the longest-serving foreign player in the Mainland Tanzania Premier League.

His biggest success in Azam FC colours has been lifting the Azam Sports Federation Cup (ASFC) silverware in 2019 when the club beat Lipuli FC 1-0 in the final in Lindi.

Last season the Ghanaian center-back made 25 league appearances and scored two goals including an equalizer when Azam FC came up against Young Africans SC, alias Yanga, in a Premier League game that ended in a 2-2 draw at Benjamin Mkapa Stadium in Dar es Salaam in September

2022.

He also helped Azam FC reach this season's ASFC final which witnessed the club suffering a 1-0 defeat to defending champions Yanga.

On Ndoye, the 24-year-old Senegalese center-back was signed at the start of the 2022/23 campaign from Senegal's Tengeuth FC.

He struggled with injuries in his first season, limited to only nine league appearances throughout the campaign.

His contract extension unites him with his former coach at Teungueth FC, Yousouf Dabo who joined Azam FC during the closing stages of the just-ended NBC Premier League.

Dabo has been tasked with reviving Azam FC's fortune ahead of next season following back-to-back disappointing campaigns.

The duo brings the number of contract renewals at Azam FC to five players, following in the footsteps of midfielders James Akaminko and Sospeter Bajana as well as right full-back Nathaniel Chilambo.



Azam FC central defender, Daniel Amoah. PHOTO: COURTESY OF AZAM FC

Africa's top clubs to miss out on new Africa Super League format

By Correspondent Nassir Nchimbi

THE inaugural Africa Super League, which is set to kick off in October, will so far bring together eight teams according to reports.

Confederation of African Football (CAF) president Patrice Motsepe confirmed that the tournament will be delayed by two months, among several key changes to the tournament that may also include a name change.

The exact format of the tournament is yet to be revealed but, according to credible sources, eight teams will be included, deviating from the initial plan of featuring 24 clubs.

CAF had also planned to divide the clubs into three groups based on their geographical region, North Africa, Central and West Africa, and Southern and East Africa.

The selected clubs will include record African champions Al Ahly of Egypt, Wydad Athletic Club (Morocco), Esperance Tunis (Tunisia), Mamelodi Sundowns (South Africa), Petro de Luanda (Angola), and Simba SC (Tanzania).

DR Congo's TP Mazembe, Enyimba FC of Nigeria, AC Horoya of Guinea, and Petro Atletico of Angola may also take part.

The selection has raised eyebrows, particularly due to the absence of certain notable clubs.

Algeria, in particular, may feel slighted, as their clubs have displayed impressive performances in recent seasons.



Confederation of African Football (CAF) president, Patrice Motsepe.

CR Belouizdad reached the quarterfinals of the last three CAF Champions Leagues and USM Alger won the second tier of continental tournaments, CAF Confederation Cup, this season.

Several other powerhouses

have moreover also remarkably been left out including Zamalek FC (Egypt), Raja Casablanca (Morocco), ES Setif (Tunisia), and South Africa's Kaizer Chiefs and Orlando Pirates.

However, the selection pro-

cess aimed to include teams that have proved their worth in recent competitions alongside the continent's powerhouses.

Enyimba FC, despite not reaching the CAF Champions League knockout stage since

2011, represents the most populous country in Africa and brings a significant fanbase to the tournament.

TP Mazembe, with their impressive history of 11 CAF inter-club tournament titles, will be eager to reclaim their former glory after a string of underwhelming seasons including losing five of six 2023 CAF Confederation Cup Group Stage matches.

As the Africa Super League garners attention and anticipation, questions surrounding its financing remain.

Previously, there were discussions of a potential partnership with Saudi Arabia contingent on the CAF's support for the country's bid to co-host the 2030 World Cup.

However, recent developments suggest that the Saudi bid may no longer be in contention, leaving uncertainty regarding the financial backing of the tournament.

The tournament aims to supersede the long-standing CAF Champions League and CAF Confederation Cup, positioning itself as the premier platform for inter-club competitions across the continent.

This groundbreaking initiative promises significant financial injections, which are poised to facilitate club development and further enhance the infrastructure and organization of African football.

With an impressive annual prize pool of \$100 million, including a remarkable \$11.5 million for the victorious club, the ASL aims to address the long-standing issue of inadequate prize money in CAF competitions.

Flexibles by David Chikoko

